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HIS ONLY SON OUR LORD

MEDITATIONS ON THE PRAYER
OF THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

BY

GERTRUDE HOLLIS

AUTHOR OF "MINE HOUR," "BUT CHIEFLY," "AND WAS
INCARNATE," ETC. ETC.

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HIS ONLY SON—OUR LORD

I

INTRODUCTION

“**H**IS only Son—our Lord !” The words, daily on our lips and, God grant, in our hearts, are the complete Creed of the Incarnation, the perfect revelation of the love of God for man, and the love of man for God. We say them sometimes carelessly, sometimes without thinking, and yet, if we could grasp all that they mean, and live up to all that they teach, life would be joy and death would be triumph indeed.

Let us say the words now with a prayer to the Holy Spirit to show us more and more of what they mean until, even in His sight, we are believing rightly that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.

“I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.” It is faith in a Living Person that we confess in this Creed ; it is knowledge of a Living Person that we desire to obtain. How shall we learn to know Jesus Christ better ? How will God reveal Him to us ? Of this we may be sure, that we shall never know Him as the only Son until we know Him as our Lord ; in Him the one is the revelation of the other.

Spoken words, above all, those spoken in the hours just preceding death, are one of the greatest revelations of personality. We all know the solemn force attached to things said by the dying ; the most simple and ordinary sentences seem to be full of meaning. We dwell upon them, repeat them, and never forget them.

Of all words spoken by those who are entering the valley of the shadow of death, surely the most sacred are their words of private personal prayer. Hardly ever during life do we allow anyone else to hear what we say to God, but that shyness is often altogether forgotten when we know that the unseen Hands are stretched out to withdraw the Veil. It does not matter then to the passing soul who is listening ; every thought is fixed upon the knowledge that is coming ; we are alone with God, even though we may be surrounded by earthly friends.

May we not most reverently believe that it was so with our Blessed Lord's perfect Human Nature, as the supreme crisis—"Mine Hour"—drew near ? Before the Passiontide we are only told that He prayed, sometimes all night long ; we are never told the words that He said. Once He lets us hear Him consider how He ought to word His prayers, "What shall I say ?" (S. John xii. 27). Twice He said words of thanksgiving aloud, when the seventy returned rejoicing in the success of their mission, and when He was conscious of His own power to recall the departed spirit of the friend He loved from Paradise (S. John xi. 41, 42), but it is only as the shadow of the Cross grows darker, and the time grows shorter, that the holy secrecy of His personal prayers to His Father is a secret no longer.

He did not do this accidentally or for nothing : it must have been that we might look into that Holy of Holies, and listen with all our hearts. "I spake openly . . . in secret have I said nothing" He told Caiaphas on Maundy Thursday night, but that referred only to man. As the Passontide hours pass on He speaks openly to God, and does not even say His prayers in secret. We may hear those prayers, and our privilege is almost past belief.

Year by year as we come close to the Day of the Passion, the Church on Maundy Thursday reads to us the seventeenth chapter of S. John's Gospel, the prayer

of the great High Priest. Let us think about that prayer. Let us ask the Holy Ghost to show us why our Lord said it aloud, and kept it safe in S. John's memory for perhaps fifty years, in order that we might hear it.

Before we begin our study of the prayer let us realise that God has not only given us the Holy Ghost as a Teacher, but He has also given us the power to learn. The best of teachers is helpless if a scholar cannot learn. God has given us that power of making an "image" in our minds of what we learn which we call imagination. Many of us leave that faculty almost unused in our study of Holy Scripture, and the consequence is that we too often read and learn without any real assimilation, and certainly without anything like the delighted eagerness that might be ours.

Let us put our power of imagination under the Holy Ghost's control. He will show us living pictures of the time and place when and where the prayer was said. He will bring the High Priest Himself so vividly before us, that we shall see His Face, and hear His Voice.

II

THE RECORDER

BEFORE we think of the High Priestly prayer itself, let us try to realise how we come to know it at all.

First of all, let us remember that for perhaps fifty years after it was uttered, it was enshrined in one loving human heart. When that long half-century was over, no other human being was left in the world who had heard it prayed, except the old Bishop of Ephesus, John the Divine. If then he had not written it down, it must have been for ever lost.

Let us picture him coming along the rocky road over or round Olivet in the afternoon of that spring day in Nisan—the last of his Master's mortal Life. He and S. Peter have been sent to make the necessary preparations for the Passover feast, the last *necessary* Passover of the Jewish dispensation after about twelve hundred years of observance. How little the two apostles can have realised these things, as they watched for the promised water-carrier who was to guide them on their errand. They knew, of course, that the commemoration of the rescue of Israel from Egypt was “a night to be much observed”; they were anxious to keep the Passover with all possible devotion and reverence, but of the real meaning of all that they would hear and see within the next few hours they can have known scarcely anything.

We may perhaps wonder why the Holy Spirit selected S. John alone to record so much of what Jesus said during the Passion hours. Was it because he seems to

have been watching and listening in such silence all through those hours? Perhaps we have never thought that from the time when, sitting on Olivet at the sunset hour on the Tuesday in Holy Week, he had wanted to know when the Temple would be destroyed (S. Mark XIII. 3) his questions about the traitor, one of which he himself tells us he only asked at S. Peter's suggestion (S. John XIII. 24), are the only words he is recorded to have spoken to our Lord.

Over and over again as the Passion hours went on, we hear S. Peter's voice, but S. John's, never. So far as we know, he seems to have kept silence through the washing of absolution; through his first Communion; and through all the mystic teaching of that wonderful evening. S. Thomas, S. Philip, S. Jude, all ask questions; S. John silently listens. No word of his is recorded in Gethsemane or on Calvary. Even when his dying Master gives the precious Mother into his care, he seems to accept the sacred charge in silence. Watching and listening as he lay on the Sacred Breast; watching and listening as he stood at the foot of the Cross; it is little wonder that, not the first of the apostles, but the best of the apostles has remembered most of the Passion words.

There was also the fact that S. John had so many long years to live. We are not told that he had any acquaintance with our Lord before the Baptist's ejaculation, "Behold the Lamb of God!" revealed Him. For three short years he had been learning the most stupendous truths; now in three short days he is to see the most tremendous facts—it is well that he has perhaps eighty years remaining in which to ponder over them, and find out all that lay behind those facts and truths. In his study at Ephesus, on the dreary rocks of Patmos, everywhere and always, he was thinking of what he had heard and seen while, as a young man, he had shared the daily life of the Incarnate Lord. So when the command of the Spirit came at last, "Write in a book," he was ready to do it.

We can imagine the venerable Bishop, perhaps, like Bede, dictating to an eager disciple, as he strokes the little partridge tradition says he loved, thinking, remembering, repeating the sacred words which above and beyond all others have brought light, and life, and love to such countless souls. If at the last great day of revelation we all know what has been the result of the words we have said and written on earth, who shall measure the rejoicing of John the Divine?

The unknown writer of the second Book of the Maccabees finishes his work with the hope that he has written "as is fitting the story" (2 Maccabees xv. 38).

"As is fitting the story!" Countless multitudes of devout souls in all the ages since can testify how wonderfully, so far as human words *could* do it, the aged Apostle wrote "as is fitting the story," that—

" . . . old, old story,
Of Jesus and His Love."

But "in Holy Writ we must seek truth, not eloquence"—so, in his monastic cell at Zwolle, Thomas à Kempis wrote. We can have no better guide for our study of the loveliest writer in Holy Scripture than the directions of that mystic fifteenth-century saint, whose life almost equalled the Apostle's in length.

"Let it not trouble you whether the writer be of weight or no,
Whether his name be great or small,
But let the love of simple truth draw you to read your book."

With that motive, and with that desire, may we read what S. John tells us of the prayer he heard his Master say on the first Maundy Thursday night.

III

THE PLACE

THE “upper room”—what sacred memories those words bring to our minds. Let us think a little about that holy spot so described first by our Lord Himself (S. Mark xiv. 15), in which the High Priestly prayer was offered.

When they met the water-carrier for whom Jesus had told them to look, the two Apostles followed him to a house somewhere in Jerusalem, the owner of which, as the Lord had said, immediately placed “the guest-chamber,” the large room he kept for visitors, at their disposal.

Many traditions have centred about that room. In very early times it was believed to have been the home of S. Mark, described in the twelfth chapter of the Acts as being somewhere within a short distance of the prison from which S. Peter had been set free by angelic aid (Acts xii. 12). It was also said to have been the place where the Risen Lord found His disciples assembled, both on Easter Day and its octave, and that it was to this “upper room” that the Holy Ghost descended on the birthday of the Living Church. Later tradition made it too the place from which the holy soul of the Virgin Mother passed to meet her Divine Son again.

The site of the upper room now shown to pilgrims is on Mount Zion, but outside the city walls, in the ancient block of buildings covering the traditional tomb of David. There was a Christian Church there before the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was built, and the belief

that the last evening of our Lord's mortal life was spent on this spot goes back at least as far as the seventh century. This "Coenaculum" may be, at least, very like what the original "upper room" must have been on that first Maundy Thursday; it is a large bare stone-walled apartment with a vaulted roof.

The upper room was probably approached by an outside staircase from the courtyard. If it *was* in S. Mark's home, we know that there was an outer gateway (Acts xii. 13), which could be secured inside, and this agrees with the account of the precaution taken by the assembled apostles on the Easter evening, and especially remembered by S. John, "when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews" (S. John xx. 19).

How marvellous it is to see how, with the unutterable burden of the salvation of the whole world on His human Mind, our Lord can yet, all through His Passion, give reverent attention to the smallest details necessary for the performance of His Father's Will, and the fulfilment of prophecy. The little colt standing just in the right place, the man carrying the water-pot just at the right time, the preparation of the Passover just in the right way; the cries from the Cross just in the right words—it is all so carefully planned and arranged because "thus—and 'thus' only—thus it must be" (S. Matthew xxvi. 54).

The room was already "furnished and prepared," so the search for leaven had already, no doubt, been completed. S. Peter and S. John would only have to see that everything essential for the Paschal meal itself was there. The lamb; the "bitter herbs," such as lettuce and endive; the "mazzoth" cakes of bread made without leaven; the red wine sufficient to fill four cups; and the water and "towel" for the preparatory ceremonial washing, were all placed in readiness. Lamps would also be prepared, for the sun must have set before the Passover could be eaten, and then the

apostles seem to have gone back to Bethany until the evening brought them all with their Master into the city (S. Mark xiv. 17).

“Where wilt Thou that we prepare ?” the disciples asked. What is the answer to that question now for us ? Ah, we know well enough. The altars of our churches, and our own penitent hearts, are the places where He wills that we shall prepare for His coming. Let us then, like S. Peter and S. John on the first Maundy Thursday, “do as Jesus has appointed”; let us do everything we can to make fitting preparation for Him, and then, from the altar and from the heart, send out the appealing cry, “Come, for all things are now ready !”

IV

THE TIME

BIBLE students have always found a great difficulty in the Gospel accounts of the time at which the Last Supper took place. If we had only the first three Gospels, it would seem clear that it was the actual Passover meal, which was eaten on the evening of Nisan the 14th. If we had only the fourth Gospel, it would seem clear that it took place the night before the Passover. The greatest scholars think that S. John probably gives the accurate dates, and that, therefore, our Lord desiring, as He Himself said, to eat the Passover with His disciples "before I suffer" (S. Luke xxii. 15), kept the feast a day in advance. We may then guide our meditation by S. John's account, and think of the first Maundy Thursday as the night "before the Passover."

"Jesus knew that His Hour was come," S. John writes.

Let us try to realise something of what that knowledge must have meant to the Human Nature of our Lord.

First of all, He knew that He had only a few short hours to live; that when the sun next set His Spirit would be in another world, and His Body would be lying still and dead in the garden cave on Calvary. To His perfect physical nature, in the very prime of life, strong and well, so far as we know, that knowledge must have been just the tremendous strain that it would be to one of us. We know that it was so, by His own confession that He was "exceeding sorrowful even unto death,"

“ sore, amazed and very heavy ” ; and by the blood-like sweat.

So far we can understand and enter into this part of His Passion. But there was another perfect knowledge which it is impossible for us to grasp, though we may, and we should, think of it. Jesus *knew* that the eternal fate of every human being who ever had lived, or ever should live, depended upon how He met this supreme “ hour ” of His Incarnate Life. Before the sun should set again the battle must be either lost or won, and the result depended upon Him.

S. John tells us that our Lord was specially conscious on this particular evening of one other tremendous thing, that “ He was come from God and went to God.” He knew that this “ hour ” was the supreme crisis of His Human Life, to meet which He had become Incarnate. “ For this cause came I unto this hour,” S. John had heard Him tell Himself : it was the turning-point of the way from God to God.

There are “ times ” in all human lives which are turning-points, “ hours ” which make all the difference in the world, but very often, perhaps generally, we are unconscious that we have reached them. The great moment may be something quite ordinary and trivial, a word, a letter, a meeting, an accident ; possibly not until long afterwards do we realise how it changed our life.

How unconscious the apostles must have been of all that their first meeting with the attractive Peasant of Nazareth would mean. Think of S. Paul starting on his persecuting journey all unknowing that his “ hour ” would come before he reached his destination. Think, above all, what must have been the total unconsciousness of the Holy Virgin before that most supreme of all “ hours,” when in her human body “ the Word was made Flesh.”

But there was no unconsciousness in our Blessed Lord as He came unto His “ hour.” He knew exactly all that

it meant for Himself, "knowing all things that were coming upon Him" (S. John xviii. 4), and all that it would mean for others, "knowing that the Father had given all things into His hand" (S. John xiii. 3).

Not only for our Blessed Lord was that first Maundy Thursday evening a supreme crisis. "This is your hour," He told the priests and elders, and the captains of the Temple police, when they came to arrest Him. S. Peter—can we doubt for a moment that all through the rest of his life, he looked back upon that night as a turning-point, unconscious of it as he was when he came with his Master from Bethany? And Judas—Maundy Thursday night was the supreme crisis in that saddest of all human lives. When he came into the upper room, the intention to betray his Lord was in his heart, but S. John seems to tell us that he had not fully made up his mind (S. John xiii. 2), though he had taken the preliminary steps. Not until he deliberately accepted the token of friendship from his Master's own hand (S. John xiii. 26, 27) did he give Satan complete and full possession of his disloyal heart, "after the sop Satan entered into him," and he committed the sin which, so far as we know, "hath never forgiveness."

The knowledge of all that it meant for others as well as for Himself, was clear and plain to our Lord's Mind when He calmly announced, "The hour is come!" We cannot understand; we can only grasp this at least that it was "love Divine, all love excelling" that enabled Him to meet it.

V

THE APOSTLES

LET us think a little of “the twelve” (S. Mark xiv. 17) with whom the Lord had so longed to eat His last Passover, and who were so unconscious of their unspeakable privilege.

How famous that little band of men would be, after whom the world would name its children, its cathedrals and churches, its colleges and hospitals, its knightly orders and its battleships, its towns, and streets, and houses.

How little they knew that night what their age-long renown would be; how differently perhaps they would have acted if they had known. Of the best known amongst them we know but little; of most of them we know practically nothing; of two of them we do not even certainly know the names, and yet how very real they are to us.

These men, so highly exalted, were all “chosen out of the people.” How could they be anything else when they were to follow the Son of a village carpenter’s betrothed wife? To our Lord their selection was one of the most serious moments of His Life, prepared for by a whole long night of prayer, but we seem to learn from the Scriptures that the original choice was not His alone. When He speaks of them to the Father it is always as “the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world,” “those whom Thou hast given Me.” S. Peter, in the Italian centurion’s house at Cæsarea, said that they were “chosen before of God” (Acts x. 41).

We can understand how much the choice of the twelve must have meant to our Lord's human nature, as one by one He called them out. For the rest of His mortal life they were to be His close companions, working, eating, sleeping, living with Him always. When that mortal life was over, it would depend upon them whether it had been lived in vain.

He knew the future of each one, their individual weakness and strength. The temptations that would come to them (S. Luke xxii. 31); the sins they would commit (S. Mark xiv. 21, 27, 30); the sufferings they would endure (S. John xvi. 2)—they were all clear before Him. Where, and when, and how the end of life would come to each one of them was no secret from Him (S. John xxi. 19).

"The twelve"—what were they thinking about as they came with Jesus to their last Passover and their first Communion? Ah, no wonder He had to cleanse them; no wonder He had to leave many things that He wanted to tell them untold! These Jewish peasants were arguing about their own greatness (S. Luke xxii. 24), and the Son of God was washing the dust of the Bethany road from their feet!

Let us think a moment of our Lord's amazing patience with them, as He explained (S. John xiii. 10), and warned (S. Luke xxii. 34) and promised (S. John xvi. 7) and cheered (S. John xvi. 33).

They were probably most of them about His own age; S. Peter was certainly older (S. John xxi. 18); but to Him they are children, His "little sons," as Wycliffe translated it (S. John xiii. 33). They are speaking, understanding, thinking "as a child" thinks and speaks and understands, but He knows that they will soon put away childish things and become "the men which thou gavest Me." He thinks of them as He thought of the little ones who were laid in His arms in Galilee. "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven" He had said then, and

He speaks of these "little sons" in the same way, for He tells the Father Himself in the High Priestly prayer that they are "not of the world," and prays that they may be with Him in that kingdom now so shortly to be all His own.

They would all fail Him during the next few hours, though one now is even resting against His Heart, and all are eagerly assuring Him of their loyalty and love. They would all sin grievously against Him, and He knew it, and yet, as we study the High Priestly prayer, we find Him thinking and speaking of them only as saints, praising them to the Father, confidently asserting His trust in them. Our Lord was looking far beyond that Passover night, beyond time altogether, to the final perfection of the Church He had lived to found and was going to die to save, and He knew that it would be built up upon the unmovable steadfastness of these who were so weak and unstable that night. Upon them would yet safely rest the whole structure of Jerusalem which is above, for the foundation-stones of that Holy City, through all the eternal ages, will bear the names of those who will forsake Him in Gethsemane now, but will even yet follow Him to prison and to death.

VI

THE PRAYER

MAUNDY Thursday evening is drawing to a close ; very soon the Lord must be in Gethsemane, for even now Judas is telling the priests and elders that their opportunity is at hand, and doing his infamous work " quickly " (S. John XIII. 27).

The twofold Feast—the Feast of the past and the Feast of the future—is over : the Passover has ended, the Eucharist has begun. " Till He come " in the Incarnation ; the need for that memorial sacrifice has ceased. " Till He come " in the Second Advent ; the need for that sacrificial memorial is only now beginning. It is the last time in His mortal life that He and His apostles will be together ; His last opportunity to teach them. When next they meet, His *immortal* Life will have begun. He has told them all He can ; He has answered all the questions He knew they were desirous to ask Him ; the last few moments in that sacred room He will spend in prayer and praise—the High Priestly prayer and the Hallel (Psalms CXIII.-CXVIII.).

Let us once more try to picture the scene, and feel the silence, as our Lord, no doubt standing, begins to pray.

Of our Blessed Lord's personal appearance we can, of course, know very little. He was " like unto the Son of Man," and with that picture of His perfect Humanity we must be content.

We know just what clothes He was wearing, for S. John mentions them twice. He remembers how our Lord took

off His outer mantle and tunic when He washed His disciples' feet, and it is he who tells us that the Roman soldiers the next morning had to make the coat a gambling stake because it had no seams.

As the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures help us vividly to imagine the Lord with His Eyes raised to Heaven, and the silent apostles listening, let us think for a moment about the prayer He is going to say.

We are accustomed to call the prayer He gave us as a pattern for our own prayers, the "Lord's Prayer," but the High Priestly prayer is the "Lord's" prayer in the highest sense, for it is the prayer that none but the Lord could say. On any other lips than His it would be the most appalling blasphemy. We can almost imagine that some of it must have been a shock to the apostles' imperfect faith and knowledge, as they heard Him pour it out.

From beginning to end the High Priestly prayer is the most tremendous assertion He ever made of His own absolute Divinity. Think of the claims He makes in it ! He calmly says that it is life eternal to know Him ; that before the existence of created things He had shared the Father's eternal glory ; that He and the Father were, not in union, but a Unity ; that *everything* that belonged to God was His ; that He had supreme power over all flesh ; and the right to give everlasting life to all. Can we imagine anyone else saying such a prayer ? Can we imagine using such words ourselves ?

If we meditate upon the majestic statements of the prayer, and think again of how and when it was offered, will it not help us to realise more clearly the mystery of the Holy Incarnation ?

Life eternal to know Him—before the morning one of His Apostles will have indignantly declared "I do not know the Man !" The eternal existence in the Father's Glory—there is a gentle woman somewhere in the City who can remember wrapping Him in swaddling clothes.

The Unity with the Father—it is not long since someone scornfully asked, “Is not His Mother called Mary?” The possession of everything belonging to God—a few months ago the foxes and birds were more sure of shelter. Supreme power over all flesh—only about three months ago He had been turned out of a Samaritan village. The power to give eternal life—to-morrow afternoon He will have laid down His own life and those who have trusted Him will be scattered in hopeless misery. Yes, indeed, as we listen to the High Priestly prayer of the Incarnate Son of God, the thought in our hearts will surely be like the Psalmist’s when he thought of the mystery of his own existence, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me.” It is not only the prayer of Man to God; He prays as an Equal to an Equal.

Let us listen, as the High Priest says His prayer, and ask the Holy Spirit to teach us all and everything that He wants us to learn as He lets us hear Him say it.

VII

“ FATHER ”

“ **F**AITHER ! ”—the first word of the High Priestly prayer would be familiar indeed to the listening apostles. During the last three years they had heard it perhaps more frequently than any other word. It had been constantly on their Master’s lips, and they knew that His use of it had bitterly offended the Jews. One of them had been thinking about it that very night, and his thought had ended in his making the most tremendous request that was perhaps ever on purely human lips, “ Show us the Father.”

“ My Father ! ” With one exception, this is the only Name by which our Lord speaks to God, during His Incarnate Life. Perhaps we have never thought that it was the *only* Name He could use in His twofold Nature, both as God and Man, both as the Eternal Son and the Incarnate Son. The only other Name by which He addresses God is “ My God ! ” as He came out into the light again from the horror of darkness on the Cross. Conscious then of the “ extreme malediction ” of separation from God ; so completely identified with sinners that He feels and speaks as though their sins were His—it is then that the sacred “ Father ” is exchanged for “ My God, My God.” It is the Sinless Son saying for all His sinful brethren, “ I am not worthy to be called Thy Son.”

The word with which the High Priestly prayer begins is a revelation of the Mind that was in Christ Jesus. It

was through this Name that we began to learn His Mind, the Mind of a Boy of twelve, twenty-one years ago. The thought of "My Father" was inspiring and controlling Him at His first Passover just as the thought of "My Father" is inspiring and controlling Him at His last Passover.

It was the fact that the Temple was "My Father's House" that gave the glorious building its only sacredness in His sight, and made Him love its courts so dearly. Without the thought of the Father, it would have meant no more to Him than Herod's temple to Augustus Cæsar which He passed each time He came through Samaria. The most ordinary things of daily life were reminders of the Father to Him. The sparrows hopping about the mustard bushes on the plain of Esdraeon ; the gorgeous flowers of the Palestine spring ; even the clothes His congregations wore, made Him think of the Father's care. Little children were sacred to Him because of their angels' adoring gaze on the Father's Face.

Our Lord's language about His Heavenly Father is, often, of course, very mysterious, and we can only think of it with the most reverent hesitation ; but over and over again He says that when the Father sent Him into the world, it was with directions what to do (S. John v. 19, 36), and what to say (S. John xii. 49). He seems to tell us that all His actions and all His words had been planned beforehand, and that He "must" act and speak in accordance with that plan, even in small details. On one occasion He says that this made Him feel "straitened," and we see in Gethsemane how His real Human Nature shrank from the obligations it imposed upon Him.

We know, of course, from the Old Testament Scriptures that the Incarnate Life was planned even in detail, long before the Incarnation. The Father knew always what would happen to His Son when He became Man ; the Son knew always what the Father's Will for Him would be. It was not only that He knew, as S. John says, "that

He was come from God and went to God," but He always knew the Father's Will at any moment between that sacred coming and going.

"Father!" As He allows the apostles to hear this most intimate and sacred prayer, this first word is a *sursum corda* for them. They must learn from it to live in the thought of their Father in Heaven. As they listen to-night they have only bewildered thoughts of the Father, but they will remember and realise afterwards how all through His ministry He "spake to them of the Father." Like their Master, they will feel the inspiration of the Father's Presence, the driving force of the Father's Will, as they, too, go about "the Father's business," until like Him they commend their spirits into that Father's most loving Hands.

VIII

GLORIFY THY SON, THAT THY SON ALSO MAY GLORIFY THEE

WHEN our Lord taught His disciples and us how to pray, He put the glory of God before anything else, "Hallowed be Thy Name!" It is just the same in the High Priestly prayer. His first thought and greatest desire is for the glory of God.

"I seek not Mine own glory," He had told the Jews, as He stood in the court of His Father's House : now He seems to desire that glory above everything else. It is the first thing for which He pleads, "glorify Thy Son." The last prayer we heard Him say was, "Father, glorify Thy Name"; what has made Him alter the prayer? He tells us Himself; it was because "the hour is come," when the Father will be most truly glorified by the suffering of the Son. He must be "because of the suffering of death crowned with glory" (Heb. ii. 9, R.V.), because only so can His Life end as it began, to the greater glory of God. It is only because He is "Thy Son" that He wishes to be glorified now.

There are two different senses in which our Lord speaks of glory in this prayer. One is the glory that belongs to perfect God ; the other is the glory that is given to perfect Man. The first, "the glory that I had with Thee before the world was" had been His from all eternity ; the other will be His when the victory is won, for it is "the Lamb that was slain" that is "worthy to receive glory" (Rev. v. 12). It is for this last that He is praying

now, and the prayer of Maundy Thursday night will be granted on Holy Thursday morning.

What then is He, as the *Incarnate Son*, asking for Himself and for us in Him ? It is everything that eternal life in Heaven can mean. We can only, of course, have the very faintest idea of what that "glory" will be, but do not let us be content to have no idea at all. We can learn *something*, even though human eyes and ears cannot see nor hear what the resurrection faculties will alone be able to grasp.

There is the *personal glory*, that perfect beauty which, perhaps for a few minutes only, our Lord had assumed at the Transfiguration. Did those three who had seen, it may be in the moonlight on Hermon against a background of perpetual snow, that mystic glory of silver light that shone from His Body, illuminating His very clothes, think of that Vision now as they heard this prayer ? They, at least, had some idea of what glory meant. It is still a secret, but only for three more days : Easter morning will set them free to tell the Vision to all men. But even those who had seen, so far as human eyes could see, the eternal loveliness of the redeemed in the Transfiguration of the Redeemer—even they can give us very little description of it. Sunlight and snow ; with those they illustrate the beauty and the purity of the splendid Figure they had seen, but S. John confesses that only the sight of the glorified Christ Himself can make us understand what we shall some day be like (1 S. John III. 2).

Let us look at ourselves ! Let us imagine, with all the power the Holy Ghost can give us, our own bodies transfigured like the Human Body of our Lord. Let us imagine suddenly waking up and finding ourselves possessing for ever and for ever, not only the glory of the Transfiguration, but of the Resurrection. It is not the transfigured mortal Body, but the glorified immortal Body that we shall see when we see Him as He is and find ourselves

exactly like Him (Rom. vi. 5 ; Philippians iii. 21 ; 1 S. John iii. 2). Could anything make sin more impossible than the hope of glory, if we really grasped it ? Think for a moment of black marks on that Face that “ did shine as the sun,” of soil-stains on the raiment that was “ exceeding white as snow ! ” We can only shrink from such a thought ; let us shrink from it in ourselves too, in those bodies and souls of ours in which one day defilement will be just as impossible.

IX

THOU GAVEST HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL FLESH, THAT WHATSOEVER THOU HAST GIVEN HIM, TO THEM HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE (R.V.)

“AUTHORITY” or “power” over all flesh—what a stupendous claim!

How the words must surely have startled the apostles, when our Lord said them, not as a prayer but as the statement of a fact. He was their Master, but He was not in any sense above them in earthly position. Like them, He was a working-man, living, dressing, feeding as a Galilean villager. They were accustomed to see Him treated with contempt; they had seen stones thrown at Him; they had heard Him accused of gluttony and drunkenness; they knew He was frequently regarded as a liar and an impostor, or at best a lunatic.

And now He asserts that He has the eternal destiny of “all flesh” in His own Hands by the direct gift of God the Father. Two days ago the priests had challenged Him to prove His right to turn the traders out of the Temple courts. They had demanded His authority, and He had refused to give it. Now He says quite simply how He comes to have the right He claims over all flesh.

As when we think of the “glory” of our Lord, so when we think of His “power,” we must distinguish between the power that was His own by Divine right and the power that was His by the gift of the Father. It is the last, His authority as “Son of Man,” of which He is speaking now.

Several times during His Life on earth He spoke of the God-given power which, as the Son of Man, He possessed for various purposes. The power to forgive sins, to heal all manner of sickness, to execute judgment, and to give eternal life. These were all His because "He is the Son of Man" (S. John v. 27). Perhaps we have never thought that these special powers are not eternal, because the need for them is only temporal. He will need no power to heal when "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain"; no authority to absolve where there shall in no wise be anything that defileth. When the accuser is cast down for ever, the Judge will have no sentence to pronounce; the gift of eternal life is needless where all are alive for evermore.

It is this delegated authority which S. Paul says he will give back when all that the Father meant Him to do with it is accomplished (1 Cor. xv. 24-8). During His ministry on earth He used it personally. Three days hence He will give it to His Church to use in His Name until the need for it shall cease. "The power of the keys" we call this authority. Our Lord's first thought when He finds Himself alive in the Easter Garden will be of these keys. "I have the keys of death and of hades"—those He will keep in His own Hands—but the other keys, "the keys of the kingdom of Heaven," He will give into the care of His Church before that first Easter Day is over.

"Over all flesh!" Think of the extent of the power Jesus claims in His prayer. It goes back to the time when by the inbreathed Spirit of God (Gen. ii. 7), some animal organism first became "a living soul." It goes forward to that unknown moment, when from earth and sea and death and hell, all the quick and the dead shall come before "this same Jesus" to learn their eternal fate. No human being that has ever existed or ever shall exist is beyond the authority of this sorrowful Christ; there is no authority in the world that can resist His

power where He wills to use it. Within a few hours, as He stands with hands bound before the representative of the mightiest empire, the most absolute sovereign in the world, He will tell him "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me." And Pilate will know it is true! (S. John xix. 10-12).

Irresistible power in the hands of any human being is a terrifying thing. We saw something of what it might mean in the Great War. But let us think how glorious a thing irresistible power is when it is in the hands of perfect love.

"Whatsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life." Do these words put any limit on those to whom He may give eternal life? Ah, no. "All flesh" and "whatsoever Thou hast given Him" mean exactly the same thing. What had the Father given Him? We shall know as we listen to His prayer that it was all the Father had to give, "All Thine are Mine." It is *we* who limit His power to give, by our refusal to receive. "Give Me to drink"—the words that were once on His lips as He came to the well at the end of a weary journey (S. John iv. 7), have only to be our prayer as we come to the well of living waters at the end of life's weary journey, and He will quickly draw for us, and hold the life-giving draught to our lips.

"Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life!" He said to the Jews who were trying to deprive Him of life (S. John v. 40). He was only longing to give to them what they were trying to take from Him. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," He said of His own sheep (S. John x. 10). The gift was ready for friend and foe alike; it was the supreme love-gift of the Blessed Trinity. The Father planned the Incarnation to make eternal death impossible (S. John iii. 16); the Son came to make abundant life a certainty; of the Spirit we reap life everlasting (Gal. vi. 8).

Eternal Life! Throughout our earthly journey, from beginning to end, it is kept before us as the gift of God. "That finally he may come to the land of everlasting life" is the first prayer the Church says for its little unconscious children; "until he come to Thine everlasting kingdom" is the prayer as the child comes to years of discretion; "preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life" is the prayer of every Communion; "that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting" is the Marriage prayer, and it is "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life" that the soul is commended and the body laid to rest.

X

AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, THAT THEY
SHOULD KNOW THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD,
AND HIM WHOM THOU DIDST SEND, EVEN
JESUS CHRIST

WITH His tremendous claim to have eternal life at His own disposal, our Lord also defines what He means by eternal life. He says that it is the knowledge of His Father and of Himself. Once more it is an assertion of absolute equality with God ; once more such words would be horrible blasphemy on any lips but His.

He solemnly says that it is as essential to know Him as it is to know the Father. Let us try again to imagine any other human being making such a claim.

It is not only His Godhead that He says it is essential for us to know, but His Manhood—"even Jesus Christ"—His human Name and title. It is exactly the same assertion that we make when we say, "It is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ."

He has already told His Apostles this same evening that it is impossible for anyone to come to the Father except through Him (S. John xiv. 6), explaining to S. Thomas that He is "the Way," and to S. Philip that to know Him is to know the Father. How it all sank into S. John's pondering heart as he silently listened, treasuring the teaching through the long years until he poured it out in that wonderful letter of his, his first Epistle. From beginning to end that letter is a Creed,

summed up in the echo of His Master's words, "This is the true God, and eternal life" (1 S. John v. 20).

It is a wonderful thought—that we can only come to the God through the Man. The greatest monarch must be brought to God by a Carpenter; the most brilliant scientist by a little "Holy Thing" in swaddling clothes. The millionaire can only reach Him through the homeless Peasant (S. Luke ix. 58); the most famous scholar through One Who "never learned" (S. John vii. 15).

What kind of knowledge then have we of our Incarnate Lord? Are we satisfied with knowing *about* Him? There is no eternal life in that alone. Many an agnostic knows more *about* Jesus Christ than many a Christian; even an infidel might possess that knowledge. Which words are true upon our lips—S. Peter's "I know not the Man," or S. Paul's "I know Him Whom I have believed" (2 Tim. i. 12, R.V.)?

The knowledge of our Lord comes to us much in the same way as the knowledge of our fellow-beings. It often begins by seeing a picture of Him. The little child quivering with excited pleasure over "Baby Jesus" on a Christmas card is taking the first step towards the knowledge that shall end in life eternal. Then, perhaps, while we are still children, we think we should like to know Him, and one day, it may be quite unexpectedly, we meet Him, and our personal knowledge of Him begins. As time goes on, we learn to know Him better, until He is often in our dwellings and we freely run in and out of His House. At first, when He comes to see us, we lodge Him in what He calls "My guest-chamber" (S. Mark xiv. 14, R.V.), it may be "a little chamber on the wall" (2 Kings iv. 10), or "a large upper room furnished" (S. Mark xiv. 15) and always "prepared," but before long He ceases to be a Guest, for He lives with us altogether, and we dwell together in unity.

When once that is the case, every day brings the most delightful discoveries of what He really is. It is a

gradually growing knowledge. We learn, slowly perhaps but very surely, the real meaning of the things we have been told about Him, and it is not long before, like the Arabian queen of old, we find that we have not been told anything like the half (1 Kings x. 7).

But now that He is living with us, and we are really beginning to know Him, what a meaning there is in all that we had heard about Him. We cannot question the Love that never fails us and makes selfishness and strife in His Presence impossible ; we do not fear the Light and Fire that show all that is good in us and destroy all that is evil. We find Him always the same ; we find that everything He says is true, and that He never breaks a promise. When we do wrong, we soon discover that we can tell Him about it in perfect confidence that, however grieved He may be, He will not be angry, and will pardon freely. His Loving Smile when we tell Him any good news, and His unfailing sympathy in all that concerns us, show us how truly He rejoices in our happiness and that He would never have us sad in His Presence.

“ Him Whom Thou has sent, even Jesus Christ ”—yes, we find that we can really know the Incarnate Son, with an intimacy of which we had never dreamed, but “ to know Thee the only true God ! ”—how shall we attain to *that* wonderful and excellent knowledge ? We have attained to it already ! For we have the Son’s absolute assurance that when He came to make His abode with us the Father came too ! (S. John xiv. 23). Without that assurance we could never have imagined anything so overwhelming, but it just means this, that we know the Uncreated Father just as intimately as we know the Incarnate Son, “ Such as the Father is, such is the Son,” and whosoever knows the Son knows the Father also (S. John xiv. 7).

Is our personal knowledge of God anything like this ? If so, then indeed “ This is life eternal.”

XI

I GLORIFIED THEE ON THE EARTH HAVING ACCOMPLISHED THE WORK THAT THOU HAST GIVEN ME TO DO

OUR Lord's explanation of what He means by life eternal seems to break into the prayer He is offering, as though He was intensely conscious that His disciples were listening, and wanted them to enter into the fullest meaning of every word He said.

His next words are one of those simple and yet marvellous reviews of life, which none but He could ever make in perfect truth ; the assertion of a perfectly accepted and fulfilled vocation.

We have perhaps sometimes stood in a great crowd, it may be of many thousands of people, differing in every possible way from each other. Nationality, rank, position, age, sex, occupation—perhaps there are differences in all these things. No two bodies in the crowd are alike ; no two minds are the same ; every soul differs from every other. Appearance, clothes, possessions are not alike for any two.

Yet every human existence, however it may differ in everything else, is alike in this—that it is here on earth for the glory of God ; every minute of every one of the countless millions of human lives was meant to add to that glory. We often talk about “vocation” in reference to earthly callings, but this is what God means by “vocation” ; it is the one supreme calling that is alike for every human being who ever has lived,

or ever will live. From that supreme moment in Heaven when God sent forth His Son, that supreme moment on earth when the Word was made Flesh, it became the chief duty of the Incarnate Christ to glorify God on the earth. Now, at the end of His mortal Life on earth, He looks up into the Face of God, and tells Him that He has done it perfectly and completely. “I have glorified Thee on the earth.”

Is this vocation quite out of the reach of our human power? Our Lord’s next words show us that it is within the reach of the smallest, the youngest, the weakest, the most humble. Just as He explained what He meant by eternal life, so He explains what He means by the glory of God. “Having accomplished the work that Thou hast given Me to do”—He had done that, and, therefore, He had glorified God.

“My duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour”—there is no better description of our Lord’s Human Life than the Church Catechism definition of these. Read them over carefully as though the words were on His lips, and see how wonderfully appropriate they are. We are not told that “the Father sent the Son to save the world,” but “to be the Saviour” (1 S. John iv. 14); to live the Life that would make salvation possible. “The work that Thou hast given Me to do,” was not only to die on the Cross. It was equally to lie still in the Manger, to learn lessons in the Temple school-room, to help His mother in the home and S. Joseph in the wood-yard, to wander about the Esdrælon villages, and spend hours in the disciples’ boats. He glorified God on the earth just as much as a Baby, a Schoolboy, a Carpenter, an itinerant Preacher, as He did in being the Saviour of the world. He can say now on this Maundy Thursday evening, before the Crucifixion has taken place, “I have glorified Thee on the earth,” because He had done all His life exactly the work God had sent Him to do, whether it was healing the sick, preaching the most

profound and eternal truths, or making ploughs and kneading-troughs. “I do *always* the things that are pleasing to Him” (S. John viii. 29, R.V.).

Nothing can so dignify and ennable our daily life as the constant sense of God-given vocation, and the belief that we can give God pleasure here “on the earth” as well as hereafter. Are we tired of our daily work? The thought of His pleasure gives us fresh strength. Are we uninterested in it? When we know He is pleased with the way we do it, it becomes fascinating to us. Do we want to change it? Ah no, for it is only in the work that He has given us to do that He can possibly find joy. Do we think our work is a failure? How can it be a failure when He is so delighted with it?

Some of us, perhaps chiefly those who most intensely long to give God pleasure, need to learn that He is pleased with rest as well as with active work. “I do *always* those things that are pleasing to Him,” our Lord said, and yet we find Him resting in the day-time by the Sychar well, asleep in the late afternoon in the wind-rocked boat, and taking His disciples into a lonely place that they might have time for a restful meal. The thirty years of His life at Nazareth, during which, so far as we know, He lived the same life as all the other villagers, glorified God quite as much as the three years of His ministry, the week of the Passion, the three hours of the Agony on the Cross, or the great forty days of His resurrection life.

It is just the same with us. God is glorified by rest as well as by work, by silence as well as by speech, by pleasure as well as by prayer. “The day is Thine!” yes, that consecrates our work, but “the night also is Thine,” and so our rest is for His glory too.

XII

AND NOW, O FATHER, GLORIFY THOU ME
WITH THINE OWN SELF WITH THE GLORY
WHICH I HAD WITH THEE BEFORE THE
WORLD WAS

IT is only with the deepest reverence and restraint that we can think of the next thing our Lord asks from the Father, in what are perhaps the deepest words of the whole prayer. He asks for the restoration of that eternal position which He had laid aside in order to be Incarnate ; that He may be once more "with the Holy Ghost, most high in the glory of God the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," He had told the angry Jews, when they accused Him of presumption ; now, indeed, He is seeking "His own" glory for it had been His from all eternity.

Perhaps no words ever spoken by our Lord in human hearing are a greater help to faith than these. They are a clear and distinct statement that He had lived, not only before the Incarnation, but before the Creation.

We cannot possibly know how far our Lord allowed His human Mind to be conscious of the Life He had lived before He came on earth. The Church has never been able to think of the mystery of His knowledge with anything but the most profound awe and wonder. So far as we know from the Gospel records He very rarely referred to it.

On one occasion He told the Jews that He was living before Abraham was born (S. John viii. 58, R.V.), and

was obliged to pass through them to escape the stoning which was the legal punishment for blasphemy (S. John viii. 59). Several times He referred to commandments which the Father had given to Him when He was "sent" into the world, but this is the only time when He says plainly what the conditions of His own pre-Incarnate Life had been. Quite simply He says that He had lived in the same glory as the Father without any difference or inequality, and asks that "with Thine own Self" those conditions may be restored.

We have never heard Him dwell upon His Divine glory until this last night of His Incarnate Life; it may be that He would not allow Himself even to think of it, so completely had He given it up for our sakes. Now, on the verge of the Passion His thoughts have gone away from earth altogether, perhaps only for a moment, and He is thinking of it and longing for it.

"Before the world was!" When He told the Jews that He had been living before Abraham was born, they only thought that He was claiming an earthly existence of about two thousand years. "Hast Thou seen Abraham?" they asked in scornful anger. Now His claim goes back before the existence of any created thing.

"Before the world was!" can convey no date or time-limit to our understanding; we can only rejoice that He said the words and that our faith can rest upon them.

How John the Beloved must have pondered over these words. When he begins to write His Master's biography, they are his first thought, "In the beginning was the Word" (S. John i. 1); "That which was from the beginning" are the opening words of his priceless first letter (1 S. John i. 1); the first word he records of what the "great Voice" in Patmos said are, "I am Alpha!" (Rev. i. 8). The thought is in the first letter S. Peter wrote too (1 S. Peter i. 20). The revelation must have

been a strength and comfort indeed in the days to come for all those who heard it.

“The glory which I had with Thee !” Can we go with our Lord at all as He sees that Vision splendid on this Maundy Thursday night ? We can at least picture the scene again, and try to realise the wonder of it. The stone-walled Cœnaculum ; the low seats and the table with its homely pottery ; the flat bread-cakes, the green herbs, and the cups of wine ; the water-pot and the towel ; the eleven wondering countrymen in their rough frieze garments—that is the earthly scene.

And our Lord has forgotten it all ! He is seeing—ah, we cannot say what is before those uplifted Eyes ! He is hearing—ah, who shall imagine what is ringing in His Ears ! The throne in the emerald rainbow ; the blazing crystal sea ; the perfection of the jasper-walled City ; the thundering angelic chorus—they are but the faintest image of what He is remembering as He lets Himself think for a moment of “the glory which I had with Thee.”

And then we know that an hour or two hence He will be kneeling in the moonlit olive grove, “that is called Gethsemane,” in an agony of distress and fear, thankful to have a single angel’s aid. A few hours more and He will be fast nailed to a criminal’s Cross, grateful for the touch of a Roman soldier’s wine-damped sponge ! And to-morrow evening He will be lying in a rock-hewn grave wanting nothing that human hands could give Him !

“The glory I had with Thee before the world was !” It may well be His thought on the verge of His Passion, for surely no other could have so braced and strengthened Him to meet the coming fight. Knowing that He was come from God—knowing that He was going to God : remembering the glory of the eternal past—anticipating the glory of the eternal future, and between them there stands the Cross !

XIII

I HAVE MANIFESTED THY NAME UNTO THE
MEN THAT THOU GAVEST ME OUT OF THE
WORLD ; THINE THEY WERE AND THOU
GAVEST THEM ME

IT is only for a moment that our Lord allows Himself to think of His Divine glory ; the next moment His thoughts are with His disciples again. S. Jude had just asked Him to explain why He could teach them more than He could teach the world, and, as he listened to his Master's prayer, he would find his question answered. It was because they "belonged" to Him that they could really know Him.

"I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me," our Lord said. He had shown them the Father by showing them Himself, as He had just told S. Philip. Our fuller knowledge of the meaning of the Incarnation perhaps makes us fail to realise what that growing manifestation must have meant to the apostles. We wonder that they were so slow to see, and saw so little ; the wonder is rather that they learnt so quickly and saw so much. We have the experience and teaching of nearly two thousand years to help us to know our Lord ; they had to see and learn everything in three short years.

Let us think of the facts a little. They were living the ordinary commonplace daily life of working-class men. Then quite suddenly they became acquainted with a Carpenter from an obscure village in the Galilean

highlands. Two of them met Him one evening as they were walking with an itinerant preacher in the Jordan valley, and at His invitation stayed the night with Him. Another heard of Him while he was sheltering from the sunshine under a fig-tree. Two of them caught sight of Him walking on the shell-strewn beach of the lake where they earned their living, and two others heard His call while they were mending the torn net-meshes in their boat. One saw Him pass his office near the landing-stage at Capernaum. Where and when the others first came into touch with Him we cannot tell.

They became His followers and were soon all living together ; but, so far as we know, they had no idea that He was anything more than an unusually gifted young Man. He lived exactly the same Life that they all did, working in the week, and going regularly to His village synagogue on the Sabbath days.

Very soon, however, life must have become intensely interesting for them all. Their new Leader said and did the most amazing things. Some of His statements must have shocked and appalled them ; some of His actions revolted and distressed them. He was indifferent to the things that they valued most highly, and what they despised He regarded as precious. All the time, however, they were conscious, as one of them afterwards said, that He was giving them teaching that was worth all the world to them.

It could not have been long before they discovered that their Master possessed powers beyond those of other men. Some of them discovered this at a wedding ; others when they met sick people as they walked about with Him, or while they were out fishing, with Him on board the boat. He was not afraid to touch lepers, nor to talk with outcast Samaritans, and He would go without His meals or proper rest until sometimes they thought He was mad.

The discovery of our Lord's supernatural powers

must have been hardly so astonishing to them as the discovery soon afterwards that they possessed that power themselves. Cannot we picture them meeting a sufferer, suddenly taking their Master at His word, trying to use His power, and seeing the healing take place? How much we should like to know which Apostle first made the venture of faith.

They evidently also sometimes joined in the speculations of the Jews about their Leader, and were quite familiar with the various current suggestions as to His personality—the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or “one of the prophets” (S. Matt. xvi. 14).

We perhaps have wondered how much the Blessed Mother told the apostles of the Incarnation. We do know that it was not from her that S. Peter had the manifestation of his Master’s Divinity, because our Lord said that it had not come from any mortal being (S. Matt. xvi. 17). No doubt it came in various ways to each individual apostle; it was a gradually growing conviction, but we can hardly think that any one of them had fully learnt to believe until after the Resurrection and Ascension.

On this Maundy Thursday evening they seem to be conscious that the manifestation of their Lord is growing clearer, and their own faith growing stronger. “We are sure” now; “we believe,” they tell Him (S. John xvi. 30), and He warns them how little they had really grasped. He knew that what was going to happen in the next few hours would all but shatter even the clearer faith they had learned.

We can see the gradual growth in the apostles’ expressions of faith. They recognised Him as the King of Israel—as the promised Messiah—as the teacher sent from God—as the Son of God—while they were going about with Him. The Creeds that follow the Resurrection and Ascension go far beyond all these. S. Thomas, seeing the *Risen* Lord, perhaps in this very guest-chamber,

exclaims, "My Lord and my God!" S. John, seeing the *Ascended* Lord, grasps and proclaims the whole stupendous manifestation, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God!" Beyond that, no Creed that ever fell from human lips can go.

XIV

THE WORDS WHICH THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN UNTO THEM, AND THEY HAVE RECEIVED THEM

“THE words which Thou gavest Me !”—the very thought is bewildering to human minds because of its infinite meaning. They include, not only the sermons, the parables, the direct teaching, the prayers, that were spoken by our Lord during His three years’ ministry, but everything He said, from the first Baby words to the blessing He poured out as He returned to the glory of His eternal Home. They include, not only those words we know, but the infinitely greater number that we have never heard, and in this life never shall hear ; all that the Father had told the Son to say, for the Son Himself has told us that He said nothing else (S. John XII. 49).

Shall we ever know, not only all the “other things that Jesus did” (S. John XXI. 25), but all the other things that Jesus said ? With the exception of two sentences, thirty years of His Life are silent years for us. By far the greater part of the three years’ ministry has no word recorded. On one day in the midst of the Passiontide we hear no word from Him. All the recorded words of the great Forty Days would not fill a single page in our Bibles.

Of course, we can only most reverently wonder whether we shall ever know all the words of His Incarnate Life. He told us Himself that His words have an eternal

existence and cannot be lost (S. Mark xiii. 31), and that " whatsoever " He had said is preserved by the Holy Spirit to be revealed in the future (S. John xiv. 26). We know that the angels knew and remembered words of His which His friends had forgotten (S. Luke xxiv. 6). S. Luke says that His Mother was carefully noting the things He said as a Boy (S. Luke ii. 51). Moses and Elijah heard some of the words unknown to us (S. Matthew xvii. 3), and one of His sermons was preached to a great congregation in that spirit-land where He Himself has told us that memory is possible (S. Luke xvi. 25). Our Lord warned us that the words *we* say in this life will not be forgotten in the judgment (S. Matt. xii. 36), and that we shall be judged, not, oh, thank God, by them, but by the words which He has spoken (S. John xii. 48).

From all these things we may surely gather a great hope that some day we shall know *all* "the gracious words that proceeded out of His Mouth" (S. Luke iv. 22), while He was on earth.

"The words which Thou gavest Me I have given unto them, and they have received them," our Lord told the Father.

He knew how very far they were that night from receiving some of the greatest of the words His Father had told Him to say to them. It was no secret from Him that He would find Himself alone in the joy of His Easter Victory, because not one of them had received the words of the Resurrection. He knew that even as He took them with Him to see His Ascension, they would still be looking for an earthly triumph, because they had not received His words about His Church. But He also knew that what they did know then they would know hereafter, when they had had time to think and remember and understand in the light of that Wise Spirit they had not yet received, and so He speaks of them to the Father as though He is perfectly satisfied.

We can imagine the wonderful new light the Holy

Spirit would throw upon their Master's words, as He brought them to their vivid recollection in the years that followed the Ascension. No wonder S. John puts "that which we have heard," even before "that which we have seen with our eyes" or "which our hands have handled" (1 S. John i. 1). No wonder S. Peter as he thinks of the Transfiguration dwells upon what "we heard" even more than upon what they had seen in the holy mount (2 S. Peter i. 18).

The four Gospel writers tell us what they remembered or had been told, each in his own particular way. In S. Matthew we seem to be reading a book; in S. Mark we are watching a drama; in S. Luke we are listening to a story; in S. John we are seeing a vision. But in one and all alike the words planned by the Father, spoken by the Son, preserved by the Holy Ghost, are the spirit and the life of the record.

Once more let us picture the apostles listening to the Voice that meant so much to them, the Voice that one of them tells us sounded to him like "many waters" (Rev. i. 15). They could all remember some words that had, even already, made all the difference in life to them. Sometimes it had been a mighty Voice of loud command, reaching even into the spirit-land (S. John xi. 43); sometimes a still, small Voice, answering a whispered question (S. John xiii. 25, 26). They had heard it full of joy (S. Luke x. 21); and full of tears (S. Luke xix. 41)—even to-night they will hear it singing a glad psalm and in an agony of supplication.

"Gracious words" sometimes; "hard sayings" at others, but always "words of eternal life"—yes, the very thought of them is bewildering, but could we find any subject more fascinating for meditation?

To some of those who heard our Lord speak on earth, one single word would stand out above all the rest. That loving woman from Magdala village—no other word that He ever said to her would be like the "Mary!" of His

Resurrection morning. “Ephphatha!”—perhaps the first word that “one that was deaf” had ever heard; would he ever forget it? That defiant murderer awaiting his fate to-night in the Roman prison—he will hear one sentence from his Fellow-sufferer’s Lips to-morrow, and one only, but what will it mean to him?

“The words which Thou gavest Me”—have we ever thought that some of them were spoken *after* the Ascension? When the Glorified Lord called His “chosen vessel” on the Damascus road, He revealed Himself by His human Name, “I am Jesus,” and spoke “in the Hebrew tongue” (Acts xxvi. 14, R.V.). S. John tells us many words that he heard on that wonderful Sunday when he was “in the spirit” (Rev. i. 10) in Patmos, and ends with that last message of all “Surely, I come quickly.”

XV

I PRAY FOR THEM; I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD, BUT FOR THOSE WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME

OUR first thought as we listen to these words of our Lord's great prayer is, surely, their amazing unselfishness. He is within an hour or two of the greatest crisis ever known to a human life, and is perfectly conscious of it. Yet He does not ask them to pray for Him, He only wants them to know that He is praying for them. He has forgotten Himself for His friends to-night—yes, and to-morrow He will have forgotten Himself for His enemies.

“Pray for Me!”—those are the words that would seem natural in His great need. On Olivet presently He *will* ask them for that sympathetic watchfulness that would surely have included prayer, and they will go to sleep when He wants them most sorely, but now we hear “I pray for them!” A little earlier this evening He said, “I have prayed for thee,” as He warned S. Peter of his danger. In His own unspeakable necessity He can remember them all, and think of their personal individual needs.

We perhaps have often thought of our Lord's prayers for those He loved when He was on earth—have we ever wondered about their prayers for Him? We are never told anything about their intercession for Him, and yet we cannot doubt that they must have prayed for Him very often. This very night as they scatter from Olivet,

leaving Him in the hands of His foes, will there be no prayer to God for Him in the apostles' cowardly but still loving hearts ? What else will bring one of them back to Him, perhaps within the hour, never to leave Him again until the end ? Those women of Jerusalem who will line the Via Dolorosa to-morrow ; can we not believe that there will be some amongst them who will say, as they watch Him through their falling tears, "The Lord hear Thee in the day of trouble ; the Name of the God of Jacob defend Thee" ? Those who will stand at the foot of the Cross ; they will surely pray as well as watch to see the end.

Our Lord is fighting His battle in human weakness, earnestly desiring human aid. We may reverently say that He craves for it more than He does for angelic assistance, for He will have no help from Heaven until they have failed to watch one single hour.

Yes, we may think of our Lord in His Incarnate Nature being helped by human prayers, and conscious of loss when they were not given. But we may in utter reverence and humility go further still. He is still Incarnate, possessing still exactly the same Nature that He had in Gethsemane—is there anything we can ask for Him now ? Let us realise that we are praying for Him when we say, "Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done." There are "unspeakable joys" to which He has not yet come, and which our prayers may bring more quickly to Him. The joy of the Shepherd whose sheep are all safe ; the joy of the Husbandman whose fields are all reaped ; the joy of the King whose subjects are all loyal ; the joy of the Bridegroom whose marriage is come—let us ask the Father to give them all to Him.

"I pray for them"—what may we believe for ourselves from these words in the High Priestly prayer ? "For them which Thou hast given Me ?" We are included in those for whom our Lord says He prays because we, too,

belong to Him from the moment of our baptism. Whatever His prayer meant for His apostles, it means for us.

“I pray not for the world.” He is praying just for those who are in the fullest sense His own. In a few moments He will be praying for a wider circle, for “them also which shall believe on Me through their word,” and then His prayer reaches out further still and He asks that “the world” may know and believe. The three limits—the apostolic band, the Catholic Church, the world—show us how His intercession is individual, corporate, universal.

It is just the same still as it was when our Lord was on earth. His prayers, like His teaching, must depend upon what His people can accept. There are some who can learn the deepest secrets of the kingdom; for them He can ask the very “best gifts.” There are others who do not know much, some who are only just beginning to learn, some who have not yet had even their first lesson. Ah, yes, He knows our necessities before He asks, and so He always prays for exactly what we need, at the particular moment, whether it is in the time of our wealth, in the time of our tribulation, in the hour of death, or in the day of judgment.

If only we could believe and remember that our Lord’s intercession is omniscient, what confidence it would give us. He has told us that whatsoever we ask the Father in His Name, He will do it; that in Him we may ask what we will. Then, when we are troubled because we don’t know what we should pray for (Rom. viii. 26), and are timidly afraid lest we should ask amiss, let us take happy courage. If we have the hearty desire to pray, our ignorance in asking does not matter. We have only to throw ourselves upon the Son’s perfect intercession and for our Church, our Empire, our loved ones, ourselves, we may say to the Father, “Whatsoever *He* saith unto Thee, do it.”

XVI

NOW I AM NO MORE IN THE WORLD, BUT
THESE ARE IN THE WORLD, AND I COME
TO THEE

"**N**Ow I am no more in the world"—the solemn thought had been in our Lord's Human Mind all the evening. S. John tells us He was thinking of His departure when He got up from the table to fetch the towel and water for the cleansing of the disciples' feet. He spoke of it again when they assured Him of their faith in Him.

We often think of the feelings of the disciples when they realised that their Master's visible Presence was to be withdrawn from them, but do we ever try to realise what it must have meant to Him to give up His earthly work? That most tremendous moment in human existence, when the life-work must be left to others, meant as much, yes and far more, to Him as it would to any of us. The time had come when the master of the house must give the servants their work and command the porter to watch (S. Mark XIII. 34); when the owner of the vineyard must let it to husbandmen (S. Luke XX. 9); when the sower must leave the seed to grow.

We know how to an earnest worker the life-work means more than anything else in the world; it is the very mainspring of his life. The man who retires from the business he has built up is often never happy again; the rich man no longer obliged to work longs for the time when he had to toil from morning till night. There must surely

have been something of this feeling in our Lord's human Mind when He knew that the hour was come that He should depart out of this world.

The first thing we notice is that there is no word of anxiety about the work He must leave. We have several instances in the Scriptures of great spiritual workers thinking of what will happen when they are gone, and there is always deep anxiety, sometimes almost despair.

Imagine the scene on the beach at Ephesus, when Paul the aged gathers the "elders of the Church" about him, and tells them, "I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Word of God, shall see my face no more" (Acts xx. 25). He is deeply concerned over the future of the flock because he is thinking of the "grievous wolves" that will attack it "after my departing."

Think of Ezra, so "sore troubled in mind for Israel's sake" that Uriel the archangel rebukes his want of faith with the question, "lovest thou that people better than He that made them?" (2 Esdras v. 33).

We may contrast these with our Lord's words about the end of His work on earth. It was such a work as no other man ever had done or ever could do; on its continuance depended the spiritual fate of the entire human race for all eternity. Nothing less than the Incarnation could have made it possible; nothing less than the Atonement could have made it complete; nothing less than the Resurrection could make it effective. And yet He lays it aside as simply as He laid aside His garments (S. John XIII. 4) to wash the disciples' feet. What is the secret of His freedom from anxiety, His confidence that all will be well?

The next words tell us, and how amazing the answer is! It does not matter that He is "no more in the world" because "these are in the world!"

"These are in the world!" Peasants brought up to manual work, chiefly on the sea; "unlearned and

ignorant" (Acts iv. 13); of "like passions" with the heathen (Acts xiv. 15); quarrelsome among themselves even on this very night (S. Luke xxii. 24); deserters every one of them before the morning, and yet, because they are in the world, He can go contentedly, gladly, to the Father.

"As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" He will tell them three days hence, confident that they will do their work as faithfully as He had done His own, and it was that absolute trust that made them trustworthy. They could not fail so long as He expected them to succeed; desertion was impossible while He counted on their fidelity.

"These are in the world." Between the passing of James the Great and the passing of John the Divine, all the others will leave the world, and what a report they will have to give to the Lord Who trusted them so greatly. There will not be one of them who will not be able to tell Him when they see Him again, "I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do."

Each one of them who is listening to His prayer to-night has a stone to lay in the wall of that city which must have foundations upon which the Eternal God Himself can build (Heb. xi. 10). There are only eleven of them, and there are twelve stones, for one workman has deserted the work. But Matthias will soon be numbered with the eleven apostles, and the foundation-stones will be laid foursquare. Then, through the eternal ages, all who enter in through the gates into the city will see by the names graven on those stones, from the jasper of S. Andrew to the amethyst of S. Matthias, that not one of them failed in his trust.

"I come to Thee"—there will be a day when we, too, must say those words, when we, too, must lay aside our life-work, and leave to others work that perhaps up to that moment has been entirely our own. We have to learn that this does not matter in the very least; the

future of the work is God's business, not ours, and it is for *Him* to see that it is completed. "It is needful for you that I abide," S. Paul thought. "It is expedient for you that I go away," was our Lord's point of view.

As we think how often we have had to leave unfinished the work we loved so well; as we look forward to the day when we must finally give it all up to others shall we be sad at heart? Ah no, never! Many workers may succeed us, many may do the work better, but it is the *first-laid* stone that through all the eternal ages will bear the worker's name.

XVII

HOLY FATHER, KEEP THROUGH THINE OWN
NAME THOSE WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN
ME, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, AS WE ARE

THE first prayer for the unity of Christendom !
The first prayer for that “godlike union and concord” from which we are still so far away !

It is not a prayer for the eleven listening apostles only, but for the whole Church ; and it is a commendatory prayer. To-morrow the passing Christ will commend His Spirit into the Father’s Hands ; to-night He commends His Body—His mystical Body—into that same loving guardianship, and asks the Holy Father to keep it safe from harm. For the physical Body He is so soon to leave He need never pray ; He knows that no harm can possibly come to that (Ps. xvi. 10), but He can see clearly great danger to His mystical Body from unhappy divisions.

As we study the High Priestly prayer, we shall find that the “unity” for which He prays, like the “glory” and the “power,” has two different senses—the unity of the Church in itself, and the unity of the Church with God—first “that they may be one,” and then “that they may be one in Us.”

“That they may be one!”—what kind of unity did our Lord desire for His Church on the eve of His passing away ? Nothing is more essential for Churchpeople in these times than a true ideal of unity. There is a passionate desire in faithful hearts “that they all

may be one," but, alas, it is too often the desire for "union," and that was never our Lord's ideal. He prayed, not for the "union," but for the "unity" of Christendom; never "that they may all be joined together," but "that they all may be *one*." All religious bodies joined together will never be one Church any more than the League of Nations will be one empire.

We need to realise that there are divisions in Christendom that are not "unhappy," but are essential to the very life of the Church. The Apostolic Creeds and Orders are often hindrances to union, but we may not surrender them. The doctrine of Sacramental Grace is often an insurmountable barrier, but we must not throw that barrier down. "Where no hedge is, there the possession is spoiled," wrote the compiler of Ecclesiasticus (xxxvi. 25), and we, too, often forget that his words are true of the Church of God in the world.

Think of our Lord's own action when His "hard sayings" were a cause of separation. He let "many of His disciples" go, and was prepared to lose even the very twelve (S. John vi. 67), for the sake of the truth He had taught. Let us follow His example, for, if we surrender unity for union, then the Church will be lost indeed!

"That they may be one"—as the apostles listened to their Master's ideal for them, there must surely have been some sense of shame in their minds. They had quarrelled even on the way to the Holy City; there had been strife amongst them even on this very night. Yes, they must have been ashamed as they heard the Lord ask for the unity He desired for them, and realised from His words of intercession what He thought that unity ought to be.

"As we are!" Christ's ideals are always amazing; the examples He sets are startling indeed. Once when they were hotly arguing about their own positions in the Church, "this little child" was the pattern He gave

them (S. Matthew xviii. 4). Now, as an illustration of what He means by unity, He sets before them nothing less than the Holy and Undivided Trinity.

It is only with the deepest humility and most utter reverence that we can think of that greatest mystery of our Faith, the Unity in Trinity, the God Who can say, "WE are" and "I AM." "In this Trinity none is afore, or after other; none is greater or less than another." So the Church teaches us all that we can learn of what our Blessed Lord desired when He prayed "that they may be one, as WE are."

The Athanasian Creed teaches us that the Unity of the Godhead does not destroy Personality; "every Person *by Himself* is God and Lord." It is the same with the unity of the Church. Though our Lord is praying that these eleven men may be one, He is *not* praying that they may be all alike. However perfect their unity may become on earth, they will always be "every person, *by himself*."

Three of those eager listeners will write "for our learning" in the days to come. We cannot imagine S. Matthew writing S. Peter's Epistles; still less can we imagine S. Peter writing S. John's Gospel. In all that we know of any of the apostles, they retain their distinct characteristics; no two are alike. Somewhere on this night, possibly in the city, there is a scholarly weaver of tent-cloth who, in a few years time, will send a letter from Philippi to Corinth, in which there will be a wonderful explanation of the infinite diversity which is possible in a perfect unity (1 Cor. xii.).

Just as the Unity of the Blessed Trinity includes all that the Father is, all that the Son is, and all that the Holy Ghost is, so the unity of the Church includes the distinct personality of every baptized man, woman, and child, who ever has lived or ever will live.

We may surely think that even when the Church on earth shall be a visible unity, its branches will still have

diversities of gifts and operations, and differences of administrations. The day will surely come when there will be no schism in the body; the day will never come when all the members of the body will be alike. The Church that includes in real unity the mystic, change-hating Oriental, the emotional, symbol-loving Latins, and the sober, steady-going English-speaking races, must always have room in it for infinite variety and difference. It may be that, so long as the world shall last, the Church, like the Church's God, will be three in one, and one in three.

XVIII

THOSE THAT THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE KEPT,
AND NONE OF THEM IS LOST, BUT THE
SON OF PERDITION

"**S**UFFERED under Pontius Pilate!" So the sin of an enemy of Christ is recorded for all time in the greatest Creed of the Church. "The same night in which He was betrayed"—so the sin of the friend of Christ is recorded for all time in the greatest prayer of the Church.

As the High Priest prays for His apostles, there is one of them whom He does not commend to the Father's care, for He Himself has not been able to guard him. He has refused to be protected and saved, and in a few hours he will lose himself for ever. "That lost chylde," as Tyndale's translation calls him; the only one of His "litel sons" of whom He cannot think except with a broken heart—the story of Judas is tragic indeed.

It is a story full of difficulties. Let us remember always that there is nothing in any of the apostles which we may not find in ourselves. The holiness of the "Divine" apostle; the courage of the "Great" apostle; the cowardice of the chief apostle; the impenitence of the false apostle—they are all possible to each one of us.

First, let us think of the truly *awful* power of human freewill. "After the sop, Satan entered into him"—so S. John describes the fall of Judas. Where was he when the prince of all evil took possession of him? In the very Presence of the Saviour of the world, within reach of

the Sacraments, perhaps even touching that Incarnate Lord from Whom all healing virtue went out. And yet, Jesus must stand by, powerless to help him, because he would not be helped. Satan could not have resisted Him, but Judas could, and so, perhaps for the first and last time in His Incarnate Life He is face to face with a man possessed by “an unclean devil,” and cannot cast that devil out.

“Why could not we cast him out?” the apostles had asked Him on the morning of the Transfiguration, as they watched the cure of the poor little epileptic lunatic they had been powerless to aid. “This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting” He had told them. Now, even the prayer of Gethsemane and the thirst of the Cross are of no avail; it must have been the most sorrowful of all moments in the Life of the Man of Sorrows, when He had to say of His “own familiar friend” that it would have been better if he had never been born (S. Matt. xxvi. 24).

He has sent Judas out of His Presence now, but they will meet once again to-night, and then, so far as we know, not until the judgment day. Let us picture to ourselves, as vividly as we possibly can, the meeting in Gethsemane; the mingled moonlight and torchlight; the silvery sheen of the olive trees and the flashing of the soldiers’ steel; the terrified friends and the furious foes; and between them the two human beings who represent all good and all evil. God and the devil are meeting, each in a human body.

Earlier in the evening our Lord had given His friends a token by which they would recognise the betrayer: now Judas has given His enemies a token by which to know the Betrayed. “Whomsoever I shall kiss!”

“Master! Master!” Yes, the same word rings out in the Garden of the Agony that, three days hence, shall ring out in the Garden of the Resurrection. The treachery is not incredible; let us realise that it is only

the natural result of human freewill deliberately resigned to Satanic control.

“ Friend, wherefore art thou come ? ” Perhaps we have never thought that there was a special tie between our Lord and Judas which no other apostle shared—the tribal bond. He was “ the son of Simon Iscariot ” (S. John XIII. 26, R.V.), that is “ Simon of Kerioth,” a town in Judæa, and was the only apostle who was not a Galilean. Like our Lord Himself, he “ sprang out of Judah ” (Heb. VII. 14).

Judas must have walked back from Olivet with his captured Master and the guards to the High Priest’s house, for he was watching the trial and hearing the evidence. When the dawn came he was in the “ Hall of Hewn Stone,” where the Sanhedrin met. Can we imagine the state of his mind as he waited for the verdict, and at last heard the sentence that delivered his Master to the alien secular power ? It was “ when he saw that He was condemned ” that he realised what he had done. The money he seems to have been carrying about with him was dashed upon the Temple floor, and suicide ended his disastrous life.

Judas was not “ lost ” because of his sin, but because of his impenitence. The Lord had looked upon Judas in the garden as he looked upon Peter in the High Priest’s hall ; He had said words that should have brought the traitor to His Feet in utter shame and sorrow, but it was all no use, for the power to repent had gone. The barrier of sin may be thrown down ; the barrier of deliberate impenitence is the one and only thing in the world that can make salvation impossible.

“ None of them is lost ; but the son of perdition ”—listen to the tragic words, and let us pray, oh, let us watch and pray, lest one day that loving Lord Whose “ own familiar friends ” we claim to be, should once more have to tell the Father of a dear lost child.

XIX

NOW COME I TO THEE ; AND THESE THINGS I
SPEAK IN THE WORLD, THAT THEY MIGHT
HAVE MY JOY FULFILLED IN THEMSELVES

ONCE more the ineffable joy so soon to be His flashes into our Lord's Mind, and again is instantly followed by thought for His disciples. Until they share that joy, it must lack for Him something of its full delight. He had always shared alike with them in His Incarnate Life on earth ; He only longs to share alike with them in His Incarnate Life in Heaven. Not what belonged to Him as God—"the glory that I had with Thee before the world was"—they could only "behold" that (v. 24) ; but the glory that belonged to Him as Man—"the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them"—that He longed for them to share.

"My joy!" Spiritual joy is one of the most wonderful and beautiful things in the world. How often do we *pray* for joy? Do we *ever* deliberately ask God to give us personal joy? The feeling that we ought not to be joyful, because we have sinned, is altogether mistaken ; the Christian who is always depressed and sad is refusing one of the greatest gifts of the Holy Ghost (Gal. v. 22), one of the gifts our Lord was Incarnate to give.

Even to-night, with the sorrow even unto death close upon Him, He will sing with them some of the most joyous psalms in the Psalter He loved so well—the Great Paschal Hallel. The joy must have been very deep that could *sing* that Hymn of Praise and go out from it to the

Mount of Olives (S. Matt. xxvi. 30). Twenty-one years have passed since, as a glad eager Boy, He first sang that joyous Paschal song in Jerusalem ; now for the last time its exultant words are on His Lips within the City walls. May we reverently think that one day He will sing another song of joy in another Jerusalem—His own new song—the “song of the Lamb” whose marriage is come ?

Spiritual joy is a condition entirely independent of any outward circumstances. Earthly sorrow does not touch it ; mortal pain cannot destroy it ; it is often deepest in the valley of the shadow of death.

Our Lord’s Maundy Thursday song is not the only instance in the New Testament of spiritual joy being strong enough to face the greatest earthly pain and grief. Let us picture another scene. There is a dungeon in Macedonia in which two men are sitting in stocks, chained to the walls ; it is midnight and pitch dark. Yet we know that their joyous voices roused the other prisoners as they sang their songs of praise in the darkness.

In after years S. Paul wrote a letter full of joy from beginning to end to his friends in that same city of Philippi, and that came from another dungeon, for it is one of the Epistles of the Imprisonment, when “Paul the Aged” was almost within sight of his martyr’s crown. Nowhere can we learn the power of spiritual joy more truly than in the pages of that letter.

Yes, spiritual joy is a glorious thing worth any effort to acquire. It is one of the finest safeguards against sin. Think of these apostles with whom our Lord is so earnestly desirous to share His own joy as He prays for them to-night. How grievously they will sin presently in that sorrowful Garden on Olivet ; how terribly S. Peter will fall in his anxious distress ; how faithless they will all be in the desolation of Good Friday and Easter Eve. But there will be no sin to record in any of the disciples who will be rejoicing in the Vision of Easter Day.

It is just the same with us. At what moments in our lives are we most likely to be free from sin? The moments when we, too, are glad because we see the Lord; when we are happily conscious of His effective Absolution; when we hold in our hands the Gift that will preserve body and soul into everlasting life—those are the times when sin is all but impossible, and it is when we reach the fulness of joy and the everlasting pleasure (Ps. xvi. 11) that we shall have done with sin for ever.

What is *the secret* of spiritual joy? How is it that even now Christians sometimes have faces so joyful that we can hardly take our eyes off them? That sudden light of exultant joy, telling of some great delight far beyond any joy of this world, which some of us have been privileged to see on the faces of those who are very near the learning of all secrets, and which having seen we are never able to forget—what causes it?

We need not wait for Paradise to learn the secret of never-failing spiritual joy. The Real Presence of God with us, at all times and in all places—that is the secret. When once that truth is grasped, then “whether a man be rich or poor, if he have a good heart towards the Lord, he shall at all times rejoice, with a cheerful countenance” (Ecclesiasticus xxvi. 4).

“That they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves”—was this prayer answered in the lives of the apostles? One of them will soon rush away from his Master’s Presence in an agony of grief and tears; will he be “filled full” of that Master’s joy? “In Whom believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable”; so S. Peter writes to the scattered strangers he has taught to know the Lord he once denied (1 S. Peter i. 8).

“These things write we unto you that your joy may be full”; so John the Divine writes to the “fathers,” the “young men,” the “little children,” when he tells them what he had seen and heard and handled of the Word of Life (1 S. John i. 4).

S. Peter and S. John are the only two who will *write* of their spiritual gladness for our reading in the days to come, but we can be absolutely certain that their Master's prayer will be answered for them all, and even now on this night of sorrow we may think of them in the words of the queen of the East, "Happy are Thy men, happy are these Thy servants" (1 Kings x. 8).

XX

THE WORLD HATH HATED THEM, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, EVEN AS I AM NOT OF THE WORLD

“**I**T hated Me before it hated you !” All through Maundy Thursday evening, our Lord seems to be intensely conscious of the enmity of the world and its prince. He speaks of it over and over again, evidently feeling it deeply, both for Himself and for His disciples, telling them when Satan is approaching, and that the world will only rejoice to see their coming sorrow. “The prince of this world cometh,” He said. Was that the reason why He told Judas to make haste over his treachery ? Was it because He knew that when the traitor went out, the spirit of evil must go too, for he was not welcome in any other heart in that room ? It seems to have been so, for while Judas was there He was “troubled in spirit” (S. John XIII. 21), but “when he was gone out” at once He brightens up to the thought of glory (S. John XIII. 31).

We perhaps imagine that our Lord’s Incarnate Life was lived in an atmosphere of love and peace, but if so, we are hardly right. In the home at Nazareth there was, of course, the most perfect of all Mother-love ; there was the love of S. Joseph’s just and tender heart, making an ideal home for the Boy Who was Love Incarnate. But we are distinctly told that His “brethren” did not believe on Him, and S. John describes a scene during His ministry when their taunting words to Him made it impossible for them to go up to the autumn harvest feast at Jerusalem together (S. John VII. 1-9).

He was hated by His fellow-villagers also ; Nazareth

was the one place where His love was powerless to help anyone except a few invalids. On one occasion there He was dragged in a riot to the edge of the cliff above the village, and apparently was obliged to make Himself invisible (S. Luke iv. 30), to save His Life from the furious crowd.

He had to do the same thing soon afterwards even in the Temple Court at Jerusalem, to protect Himself from the showers of stones the Jews were gathering (S. John viii. 59), and the tumults that followed the resurrection of Lazarus compelled Him to hide for some time in a desert-border town in the uplands of Judæa (S. John xi. 54). Sometimes parts of the country were absolutely unsafe for Him (S. John vii. 1); the chief priests in Judæa and Herod in Galilee alike were determined to kill Him, and throughout His ministry He was always liable to insult in word and deed.

The words that were sometimes addressed to our Lord make us shudder when we think of them. "Thou hast a devil!" was said to Him "in Whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"—have any more truly awful words ever been on human lips? The people pointed out as a glutton and a drunkard Him Who from the Cave of Bethlehem to the Cave of Calvary had kept His Body in stainless purity. They spoke of Him contemptuously as a lunatic, angrily as a blasphemer, and scornfully as an impostor.

On this last evening of His Life the world's hatred is fast coming to its awful climax: before the sun shall rise again those in the palace of the High Priest will have seen sinners spitting on their Saviour and servants striking their God; before it shall set again He will die in the midst of a jeering crowd.

He is thinking of that atmosphere of hatred now as He prays, not of what it has been to Him, but of what it will mean to His disciples when He has left them. The Gospels do not tell us that the apostles were hated during our Lord's lifetime; the world's enmity seems to have

been confined to Him, but He had often warned them that it would one day break out against them. Perhaps He guarded them from it until the day of Pentecost had fully come, and they had received the Holy Ghost Who would enable them to face it (S. Mark XIII. 9-11), for S. Peter and S. John were in prison very soon after that great day (Acts IV. 3). To-night their Master knows that they are not ready to face even unpopularity for His sake, and that one of them will be terrified at the scornful words of a servant girl.

We do not know whether the angels saw and heard the world's hatred of the Incarnate Christ : we *do* know that it was all known to the Father, and *yet* "God so loved the world ! "

"The world hath hated them because they are not of the world." It is sadly painful to think how our Lord was hated on earth, but it helps us to understand, and to rejoice over, the world's hatred of the Church. Are we sometimes sad because the Church is unpopular, slandered, scorned ? Why, what else could it be ? Are we trying to make the Church lovable in the eyes of the world ? Let us give up the attempt once and for ever, for only a Church that it hates can be true to a Lord that it slew.

We are very prone to measure success by popularity. Is it a true standard ? In earthly things, rarely ; in spiritual things, *never* ! Even to-night the popular hero is not the Saviour of the world but a common thief in Pilate's prison.

The apostles only gradually learnt to rejoice in the hatred of the world. Before the Ascension they resented it hotly. Think of the fury of the Sons of Thunder when they were refused admission to a Samaritan village (S. Luke IX. 53, 54). Yet one of those Sons of Thunder lived to write "the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 S. John III. 1). The apostle who in a few hours will be furiously cursing the servants who taunt him, will live to rejoice in the scorn of the world (1 S. Peter IV. 14).

XXI

I PRAY NOT THAT THOU SHOULDEST TAKE
THEM OUT OF THE WORLD, BUT THAT
THOU SHOULDEST KEEP THEM FROM THE
EVIL ONE (R.V.)

STILL thinking of what lies before His beloved companions, our Lord passes from the thought of the world's hatred to an enmity infinitely more dangerous, and asks the Father's protection for them from the "ruler of the darkness of this world" (Eph. vi. 12). Their future is quite clear to His Sight, and He knows from His own personal experience how skilful the devil's temptations will be.

Think of the entire change in the lives of the apostles ; what a tremendous test of character it would be. Let us think, for instance, of S. Peter. It is not many months, even now, since he had no idea of ever doing anything but catch fresh-water fish, or being anything but a Galilean boat-owner. "Unlearned and ignorant" (Acts iv. 13) ; impetuous yet nervous, conceited yet humble ; he was just a Capernaum fisherman living an everyday life.

If anyone had told him, on that day when his brother asked him to come and see the Nazareth Carpenter, that within three years he would be standing up to speak in a Jerusalem street to a congregation numbering thousands ; and that the Holy City would be an open-air hospital in which his very shadow should be the means of healing (Acts v. 15)—why, we can hardly imagine a more incredible change.

On this Maundy Thursday night, S. Peter is very near this tremendous alteration in his life, and he is not yet converted! Our Lord is praying for them all now, but just lately, perhaps in the unrecorded hours of yesterday, He has had S. Peter's possible danger especially in His Heart. "I have prayed for *thee*," He has told him since they have been in the upper room, "that *thy* faith fail not." Perhaps this most favoured apostle needed special protection from the danger of high position and personal popularity.

"Keep them from the evil one." The memory of their Master's prayer seems to have inspired both the great "pillars" (Gal. ii. 9) of the Church to warn their converts of the reality of danger from the devil. A roaring lion, ceaselessly wandering about, looking for prey—that is S. Peter's picture: the wrathful dragon conscious of rapidly shortening time—that in S. John's conception. Both of the apostles had learnt then to trust in the Divine protection that had made that evil one powerless to hurt them.

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." No, no, indeed, He could not pray for that; the only hope for the world is that they shall stay in it, for they are the Church. He is praying, not only for these eleven listening men, but for the Church that must stay in the world until the prayer of the Spirit and the bride is answered, and He can return again. Yes, it is the Catholic, not only the Apostolic, Church that is in His Heart. In a moment we shall hear Him tell the Father so, but now first He is thinking chiefly of what will happen to His disciples in the immediate future.

"Out of the world!"—why, some of these homely Galileans will see the splendour and pomp of the greatest empires the world has ever known. Before this night, so far as we know, they have lived all their lives within the limits of a country smaller than Wales. One of them

will never go beyond those limits (Acts XII. 2), but there are wide experiences before some of the others.

We can imagine how to S. Peter, in the days to come, the uneventful years of his Galilean life will seem something like a dream. The “Queen of the East,” Antioch “the Beautiful,” one of the “evil one’s” most mighty strongholds ; we know he went there (Gal. II. 11). It is certain that Rome, the “Eternal City,” with its temples, palaces, baths, and libraries, and its two million inhabitants, was familiar to him. Early and reliable tradition tells us of S. John’s long residence in Ephesus, the magnificent city where Diana’s stately temple, one of the world’s seven famous “Wonders,” attracted its millions of idolatrous worshippers.

Tradition says that the rest of the apostles journeyed far and wide, into Macedonia, Persia, India, Greece, seeing a world different, indeed, from the hills and plains of Galilee, and coming into contact everywhere with the power of the evil one.

Well may their Lord pray for the Father’s protection for them as He thinks of it all. He has kept them safe while He has been with them (v. 12) ; they are spotlessly clean now (S. John XIII. 10) ; He cannot bear the thought that the evil one should defile what He has cleansed. “Therefore now, O holy Lord of all holiness, keep this house ever undefiled, which lately was cleansed”—as the Maccabean priests prayed for the earthly temple (2 Maccabees XIV. 36), so the great High Priest prays for these lately cleansed apostles, the foundation-stones of that holy temple into which no defilement shall ever enter.

He has no desire that they shall be saved from suffering, although He knows exactly how great that suffering must be for every one of them, for His own Passion must be repeated in them. Hatred (S. Luke XXI. 17), betrayal (S. Luke XXI. 16), scourging (S. Mark XIII. 9), trial (S. Luke XXI. 12), prison (S. Luke XXI. 12), crucifixion (S. John

xxi. 19)—these all await them and His love is content that it should be so.

He has only three days to wait for that perfection that comes through suffering (Heb. ii. 10); a few short years and pain will be over for them all. “How great things they must suffer for His sake” *He* knows, but *He* accepts that as willingly for them as *He* does for *Himself*. No, it is not suffering that *He* fears for His own, but evil; not sorrow, but sin; not the world, but the devil. And so with all His loving Heart *He* commends them to His Father’s care, persuaded that that Father is able to keep all that *He* commits to *Him*.

XXII

SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH : THY WORD IS TRUTH

AS the great High Priest prays, He asks, one after another, for the four things that are essential for His Church. She must be One—Holy—Catholic—Apostolic. He has prayed for the first, “that they may be one, as We are” (v. 11); and for the last, “for them which Thou hast given Me” (v. 9). Now He prays for the *holiness* of the Church.

We think sometimes of the horror and hatred that God has for sin; do we ever think that our Lord’s horror and hatred of it *as Man* was exactly the same? Every time we make our Communion we say that sin, even to us, is grievous and intolerable, and it is true, although the words may sometimes seem unreal on our lips. We have only to imagine retaining even one slight stain all through eternity, to know that the very thought *is* intolerable! What then must it have been to our Lord in His sinlessness?

On this Maundy Thursday night, the High Priest, like Onias of old (2 Maccabees iii. 12–16), is thinking of the “inviolable sanctity” of the temple that shall be honoured all over the world, that holy temple that is to be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. As He thinks of the harm the evil one might do to that sacred building, of the treasures the prince of the world might demand, is it true again that “whoso had looked the High Priest in the face, it would have wounded his heart?” Did that sacred “countenance declare the inward agony of His Mind?”

Surely not, for He knows that the evil one will be powerless against anything that is in His Father's consecrating care. There is another description of a high priest standing in front of the altar " compassed with his brethren round about " in the " particular antient godly stories of men that pleased God," which form the concluding chapters of Ecclesiasticus. This high priest is the son of the one whose face betrayed such heart-breaking anxiety and fear ; how does the Son of Sirach describe him ? He is like " the morning star in the midst of a cloud ; the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High ; the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds " (Ecclesiasticus l. 6, 7).

Surely the Face of the great High Priest as He, too, stands " compassed with His brethren round about," must have been marked rather with the joy of Simon than the agony of Onias, for He does not fear for His temple. " Sanctify them with Thy truth " He prays ; it is the very essence of priestly intercession.

He is standing now in this plain stone room, clothed in His rough wool garments. He is wearing no " holy crown " (Exod. xxix. 6) ; He will have one to-morrow. He has no gorgeous vestment ; in a few hours He will have one " dipped in blood " (Rev. xix. 13). But when, a few weeks hence, He stands in His white and gold vestments (Rev. i. 13), and His " many crowns " (Rev. xix. 12), to plead for His Church in the very Presence of His Father (Heb. ix. 24), He will have nothing better to ask than the sanctification for which He is pleading now.

The thought of the separation between the Church and the world is still in our Lord's Mind as He prays that His Church may be holy. The words " sanctify " and " consecrate " mean exactly the same—to make wholly sacred. It is the mark that God puts upon everything that He has set apart for Himself and upon the Church above all else.

The high priest of the Church in the wilderness bore the mark of sanctification in outward visible form. "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" was engraved upon a piece of pure gold on the forefront of his mitre. The altar and everything else used in the service of the tabernacle, and the burnt-offerings, were so holy that anything that touched them shared their sacredness ; it could not be put to any ordinary use (Lev. vi. 27, 28). When the prophet Zechariah is looking forward to the day when "the Lord shall be king over all the earth" (Zech. xiv. 9), his highest ideal for the perfection of the Divine kingdom is that even the bells on the horses' bridles shall bear the same inscription as the high priest's mitre, and that "every pot in Jerusalem and Judæa" shall be as holy "as the bowls before the altar" (Zech. xiv. 20, 21).

Such perfect holiness is our Lord's ideal as He prays for His Church to-night ; a holiness that will make everything that comes into contact with it holy too. That sanctification He, the High Priest, possesses already. He is wearing not an engraved gold plate, but a little parchment in a black leather case, the sign that His Humanity is "consecrated" for evermore to the service of God alone. Does what touches Him share His holiness now ? There is a woman in Galilee rejoicing in holiness now, because once she came and kissed His Feet (S. Luke vii. 38, 45). The food His Hands have touched is all-sufficient for those who are hungry ; the water He has poured out is all-cleansing for those who have sinned. Why, even the very fringe of His tunic is health-giving, because He is wearing it (S. Matt. ix. 20).

It is nothing less than His own holiness that He is asking for His apostles, and in them, for His Church. Through "the Word" that is "the Truth," that holiness must come. Just as those who came into contact with the holy things of old became consecrated themselves, so those who touch Him in faith and love are sanctified through Him. The Church of the future will not fear to

call "Divine" that one in the room to-night, who has touched his Master's very Heart. Will Thomas the Twin ever doubt again when his finger has touched the Holy Hands (S. John xx. 27)? "Handle Me" He will say to them *all*, probably in this very room, three days hence, and in that moment they will be fit to be ordained (S. John xx. 22).

That every member of His Church may be able to touch, not His clothes (S. Mark v. 28), but His Body, He has just instituted that glorious Sacrament through which we may hope some day, like Him, to be "holy, unblamable, and unreprovable" even in the Father's Sight (Col. i. 22).

We must not forget that there can be no holiness where there is no love. The kiss that makes the loving sinner clean every whit leaves the faithless disciple "filthy still" (Rev. xxii. 11).

"The remembrance of His Holiness!"—are we afraid when we think of that grand perfection, without which we know that we shall never see the Lord (Heb. xii. 14)? Ah, no, for though we cannot see Him now we can always touch Him, and He promises still "ye shall be holy; for I am holy." Even now He is not ashamed to call us brethren, and the Father is not ashamed to be our God. If only we keep in touch with Him, we may be humbly certain that one day our holy and undefiled High Priest will present us faultless before the Presence of His Father. Then, "holy and without blemish" at last, we shall, yes, through the everlasting ages, "be holy still" (Rev. xxii. 11); and in His visible Presence be always worthy to sing the "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY" of the eternal Trisagion.

XXIII

AS THOU HAST SENT ME INTO THE WORLD,
EVEN SO HAVE I ALSO SENT THEM INTO
THE WORLD

OUR Lord's Mind has gone back once more to the existence He had had with the Father before the world was. He is thinking of that, to us unknown, moment when as the Eternal Son He accepted for Himself all that the Incarnation would mean. "Whom shall I send?"—it is the Father's question. "Here am I; send Me!"—it is the Son's response. And so "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."

Eternal things are so far beyond human comprehension; the marvel of the Incarnation is so overwhelming; that reverent minds almost shrink from thinking about that great "mystery of godliness," the "taking of the Manhood into God."

Think of some of the things that it meant. The Omnipotent would be unable "to do any mighty work" (S. Mark vi. 5); the Omniscient would be a schoolboy asking questions (S. Luke ii. 46); the Omnipresent would say "I was not there" (S. John xi. 15). He Who had been eagerly served by every created celestial being would have to ask an outcast woman for a drink of water (S. John iv. 7), and he denied a kiss of friendly greeting (S. Luke viii. 45). He Whose eternal Name has never yet been revealed to man, would share His human Name with many a Jewish peasant. He would know for the first time what limitations, needs, sufferings would mean;

He would come into close contact with what could never have touched Him before—sin and death.

“ We love Him because He first loved us ” we say, but what do those most precious words really mean to us ? What picture do we see when we think of that love ? Is it the dying Man on the Cross of Calvary ? Probably for many of us that *is* the first thought, and the greatest proof of love, but if so, we have only a feeble grasp of what His Love really was. If the Cross were its fullest manifestation, it would, indeed, be true that no Man had *greater* love for us, but there would be many who have had as great. That greatest proof of *human* love has been given to us over and over again, yes, within our own personal experience during the last few years.

“ Because He first loved us ! ”—is it the picture of a Baby lying in a stable feeding-trough that the words bring to our mind ? If so, then our grasp of the meaning of His love is truer and stronger. There has been many a man who has shown the love of Calvary ; there has never been a God Who has shown the love of Bethlehem. The love of the Man Who could die a human death for us is great—the love of a God Who could live a human life for us is unspeakably greater.

But we must go back, yes, for unknown ages before the evening of Good Friday, or even the morning of Bethlehem, if we want to get at the real meaning of love. We shall learn all that we *can* learn only when we think of that stupendous moment when the Father gave the Son, and the Son gave Himself !

“ As Thou hast sent Me into the world ! ” How little the listening apostles know what that great “ sending ” has meant for their Master ; what it will mean for themselves.

Their Master describes their mission as being the same as His own, “ as . . . even so.” All that He had been in the world, they were to be also. What He had been sent to begin, they were being sent to complete. Already

they possessed His power to heal the bodies of men ; in three days they will have His authority to heal the souls of men (S. John xx. 21–23). He, without where to lay His Head ; they, with “ no certain dwelling-place ” (1 Cor. iv. 11)—they must go out to their mission as He did ; their life must be what His Life was. When S. Paul told the Corinthian Christians (1 Cor. iv. 9–13) what were the conditions of the apostolic life, he might equally have been describing His Lord’s Incarnate Life on earth.

They must hunger and thirst as He did ; the blows that He felt they must feel. Their hands, like His, must do manual labour ; they must be content to be what S. Paul can only describe as “ filth ” and “ offscouring ” in the eyes of the world. There is one difference only in their missions, and it is a wonderful difference. His mission was confined to one small nation ; their only limit is the world. “ I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” but “ go ye, therefore, and teach *all* nations ” (S. Matt. xv. 24 ; xxviii. 19).

“ Even so have I sent them into the world.” What is the Incarnate Christ doing when He sends out into the world in His Divine strength and in their own human weakness these Galilean fishermen ? He is forging the first link of that ever-lengthening and ever-unbroken chain that will unite all succeeding ages, so long as the world shall last, to this Maundy Thursday night. It is that chain that joins every Eucharist the Church shall ever celebrate to that moment when He put into the toil-worn hands of His wondering disciples the greatest Gift that God has ever given to man.

XXIV

NEITHER PRAY I FOR THESE ALONE, BUT FOR
THEM ALSO WHICH SHALL BELIEVE ON ME
THROUGH THEIR WORD

THE great High Priest has asked the Father to make His Church one, holy, and apostolic ; now He says the prayer that will make it Catholic.

For nearly two thousand years the Church has been freely admitting all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, into the Fold. In the light of those centuries of history we perhaps hardly realise how impossible such a state of things must have seemed to the apostles as they heard His words, how very far they must have been from understanding their full meaning. S. John and S. James—what do they think about those outside their own religion and nation ? A week or two ago they wanted to burn some of them alive (S. Luke ix. 54). To S. Peter they are something “ common and unclean ” with which he will have nothing to do (Acts x. 14), “ abominable things ” (Deut. xiv. 3), from which he must always be separated. Only this week S. Philip and S. Andrew have discussed whether Greeks should be allowed even “ to see Jesus,” although they, as strangers who had “ come out of a far country ” for the God of Israel’s sake (S. John xii. 20), had a share in the prayers that were offered in the temple (1 Kings viii. 41–43). Probably, not one of the apostles would have eaten a meal with a foreigner who was not a proselyte ; their Master’s willingness even to talk to a Samaritan had astonished them.

Every Good Friday Evensong the command to “ Honour all men ” is read to us. It comes from a most loving letter wishing grace and peace to the scattered “ strangers ” in

Asiatic lands, and it was written by the apostle to whom those strangers are now common and unclean (1 S. Peter ii. 17). "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"—the apostle who would have burnt the Samaritans alive lived to write that "whosoever will."

Not "for these alone"; we may be thankful, indeed, that the High Priest puts no such limit on His prayer this night, but let us try to realise how far that intercession really goes beyond the apostolic band.

"Them also which shall believe on Me through their word." First of all, there are those who will be personally converted by any of the apostles in the remaining years of their life on earth; they will number many, many thousands. Think of the converts even of the first few years, how rapidly they grew in number: "three thousand souls"; "multitudes both of men and women"; "about five thousand men"; "a great company of the priests"; "much people"; so S. Luke's record describes those who believed through the apostles' words. For everyone of those converts our Lord is praying as His Passion is almost at hand. To us they are simply an unknown crowd of people; to Him each one is the object of fervent personal intercession.

Where are they all as our Lord prays for them to-night? Possibly some members of that very priestly council now arranging His arrest will yet be "obedient to the faith" (Acts vi. 7), because He is saying this prayer. There are devout men in "every nation under heaven" (Acts ii. 5), some of whom are perhaps already on the way to Jerusalem for the next feast time, most wonderful of all Pentecosts. That still unbelieving "brother" who will yet be Bishop of Jerusalem; Candace's black-skinned treasurer; Dorcas the charitable Jaffa worker; Lydia the Macedonian purple-merchant; the Philippian jailer; Dionysius and Damaris at Athens; Justus and Crispus at Corinth; Timothy and Titus, S. Paul's "own sons" in the faith—they are all in His Heart and in His prayer.

His own work is almost over. So far as we know, He will Himself make only two more converts, one to-morrow; the other two or three years hence. The last convert of His Incarnate Life on earth will be that unnamed murderer who is in prison to-night, who will be on the Cross to-morrow. To the apostles He will leave the conversion of all others, save one! Not through the word of any of the Twelve will His own "chosen vessel" learn to believe (Gal. i. 12); He Himself will say the "I am Jesus" that will leave Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road blind and helpless, but knowing Whom he has believed—the only recorded direct conversion of the *Risen* Incarnate Life.

"Through their word"—a few years and all the apostolic voices but one will be silent. Again a few years and John the Divine's last words on earth will be spoken. But the numbers of those who shall believe through their word will grow, and grow mightily, so long as the world shall last, because of this all-embracing prayer of their Master.

The solitary missionary in the Arctic snow-hut; the lonely priest in the African swamps; the toiling worker in the city slums; the Christian writer; the weary teacher—one and all alike may be strong and of a good courage in the certainty that the Great High Priest the night before He died prayed for every single soul they are trying, in His Name, to reach.

"Through their word"—ah, yes, that is the secret of it all. "Their word"—what does that mean? Not the human language by which they expressed the truth to those who listened to them. One of the greatest of them acknowledges that in his case that was "contemptible." The Word that led men to faith was the Living Word, the Word that was made Flesh, the Word that was God. They preached, not themselves, but Christ Jesus their Lord, that King of kings, and Lord of lords, Whose Name is called "The Word of God" (Rev. xix. 13).

XXV

THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; AS THOU,
FATHER, ART IN ME, AND I IN THEE, THAT
THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE IN US . . . THAT
THEY MAY BE ONE, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE:
I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, THAT THEY
MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE

THE great Prayer is almost finished; it is time to sing the Hallel, and go out to die. Is there anything more that the High Priest can ask for His Church before He starts to Gethsemane? At this solemn moment He knows that there is no limit whatever, either to what He may ask, or to what the Father will give. He has prayed that the Church may be One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic; He has asked for the Father's unceasing protection and blessing; for the knowledge of God that is life eternal, and for the fulness of joy and He knows that the prayers have been granted. Is there anything else He wants?

Yes, the Son has another prayer to say; the Father has another blessing to bestow; and then, indeed, the Son will have nothing more to ask, the Father nothing more to give. The prayer is so astounding, the gift so tremendous, that human minds almost shrink from the thought.

Standing in the midst of His Church on earth He asks the Father to take that Church and all who shall ever through that Church believe, into the Unity of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, "that they also may be one in us."

Perhaps we have never noticed how He reverses the prayer for this great perfection. First it is the Church in Him, and He in the Father : then it is the Father in Him, and He in the Church. The unity He desires is so complete that He can express it in either way ; God in man or man in God. The High Priest is saying the prayer of Humble Access, "that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us," "in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion" (Communion Service rubric), just before He breaks the Bread and pours out the Wine of His Body and Blood upon the Cross.

"That they also may be one in us"—does this unity seem such a tremendous thing that we almost fear to believe that our Lord means what He is saying ? A little baptized child playing with its toys—is it really true that that little child is one in the ever-Blessed Trinity ? The blind or crippled sufferer ; the poor and needy, the lonely and humble—are they in that unspeakable Unity ? And we ourselves, in our weakness, our unworthiness, our sins ; can we, dare we, think that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost regard us as being one in Them ?

As we hear Him praying that we, too, may be one with the Holy Trinity, we may believe without any fear that He knows what He is asking, and means what He says. If the truth is too amazing for us, then let us stay close to Him throughout this night and to-morrow and see what He will do to make that unity possible. Then, when all is over, and we join heart and soul in the Roman officer's creed, and confess that "Jesus is the Son of God," we shall know and believe not only that God dwelleth in us, but that we dwell in Him (1 S. John iv. 15).

"One in us !" In this request for the Church's unity with God, we have another of those tremendous assertions of our Lord's Divinity which come over and over again in the High Priestly prayer. Think of the wonder of it, as once again we picture in our minds the Maundy

Thursday scene. The Peasant standing among other peasants in His homely dress ; with toil-worn Hands, for they have made ploughs and kneading-troughs ; with dusty Feet, for no one has washed them for Him to-night —One with the Eternal Father, One with the Life-giving Spirit, very God of very God. In the Body of this simple Peasant all the fulness of the Godhead is dwelling (Col. ii. 9) ; He asserts it in the equality of that mysterious “us.”

When we have grasped the truth that God can dwell in man, then we can believe that man may dwell in God. If the Incarnation is possible to the Love of God then nothing else can be impossible.

“That they may be made perfect in one.” There is only one place where the unity of God and man is quite perfect. It only begins in the Church militant, for “that which is perfect is not yet come” ; it only grows in the Church expectant, for “they without us cannot be made perfect” ; it is in the Church triumphant alone that we shall at last “be made perfect in one.” Ah, yes, for the final consummation of the union will be the marriage of the Lamb when His wife shall be ready at last (Rev. xix.⁷).

XXVI

FATHER, I WILL THAT THEY ALSO, WHOM
THOU HAST GIVEN ME, BE WITH ME WHERE
I AM, THAT THEY MAY BEHOLD MY GLORY

YET once more before His Passion the great High Priest thinks of the Life of the Resurrection in the eternal Home. As He thinks of it, there is a great desire in His Human Heart, and before He goes out to the Mount of Olives He tells the Father what it is.

As we hear Him tell what He wants, we cannot but feel how truly He is one with us, for He is feeling exactly what we feel when we think of the life of the world to come, that life to which, at every Communion, we tell the Father we are looking forward. The certainty of human companionship in the Resurrection life—that is His Heart's desire as His mortal Life is ending, just as it surely will be our longing when we, too, know that the time of our departure is at hand.

Think of it, for never perhaps has our Saviour Christ spoken more truly “comfortable words.” His Incarnate Nature will not be satisfied, even in Heaven itself, without the companionship, first of all, of those He has known and loved on earth, and then of all those who will know and love Him through their words.

We may surely, without presumptuous speculation, think reverently a little about the renewal of intercourse between the glorified, but *still Incarnate*, Lord and those who shared His mortal Life on earth. We know little indeed of what the eternal memory of earthly things

will be, but can any devout mind doubt for a moment that, when they behold His glory, they will remember how they knew Him in His humiliation ?

That unspeakably blessed Lady, the Mother the Father chose for His Son, as she beholds that Son's glory, will she have forgotten the rough stable, the manger-cradle, the cottage home, the Temple schoolroom, the Cross on Calvary ? Ah no ; through the everlasting days she must know that the Lamb in the midst of the Father's Throne was the little Holy Thing she once carried in her own arms for the first time into His Father's House.

These chosen companions of His ministry, when they see His glory, and fully know at last how unutterably blessed they were when they entered His Service, can we believe that they will never think of those three years ? Will not the great multitude that no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, remind them of the days when they were His only followers ? "Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands"—as they see the adoration of that angelic host, will they not remember that once they regarded as an idle tale an angel's message that He was alive ?

As they gaze on the eternal glory of their Lord, and think of the days when He shared their humble life, when He helped them with their fishing, when He washed their dusty feet, when He made their fire, when He served their breakfast—ah, we *cannot* imagine what it will all mean to them.

"It is the Lord !" was John the Divine's amazed exclamation as he recognised his Risen Master on the shore of the lake in Galilee. Will there not be an eternal amazement in the minds of these followers of His as they behold the glory of that same Master, and know that "it is the Lord ?"

When Mary of Magdala beholds the glory of that "Master" Who will never to all eternity be lost to her

again, will she not recall that hour in the earthly garden when one word from His lips turned her agony of grief into joy that she could hardly bear ?

Think of the special memories of some of the apostles when the vision of glory for which they heard their Master pray shall be theirs for ever. Andrew the First-called ; will he think of that night beyond Jordan when he found the Christ ? Peter the Rockman ; when he fully knows Who his Master really was, will he not be thankfully glad to remember that he said He was the Son of the Living God while He was on earth ? “ My Lord and my God ” ; will not the scene when those radiant words were spoken remain in the mind of S. Thomas in the everlasting Eastertide ? And John the Divine ; as he gazes into the sunshine of glory on his Master’s Face (Rev. i. 16) will he ever forget the night when he lay on that Master’s Breast, the hours that he spent by that Master’s Cross ? We may, indeed, feel sure that when He has them where He is, and shows them His glory, those companions of His mortal Life will find that neither He nor they have forgotten.

It is not only to those who came into actual touch with Him on earth that the Incarnate Lord longs to give the vision of His everlasting glory. “ They also, whom Thou hast given Me ”—He wants them all. He will not be satisfied until He can personally reveal His eternal glory to every single soul in the innumerable multitude of the redeemed : every one must be with Him where He is ; every one must see the Beatific Vision.

“ With Me where I am ”—do we really want to be with Him wherever He is through all the eternal days ? Then we must be always where He is now. In suffering and sorrow, for we must be with Him in Gethsemane ; in self-denial and sacrifice, for we must be “ crucified with Him ” ; in death, for we must be “ buried with Him ” ; in joy and gladness, for we must be “ risen with Him ”—only so shall we “ ever be with the Lord.”

Let us then rejoice in these words of the great High Priest as He tells His Father how He wants us. He has told His apostles to-night (S. Luke xxii. 15) how He has longed to share the last Supper of His mortal life with them, that Paschal Feast that is ended now. Infinitely greater is His desire to eat with them and with us that other Supper, the Feast that will never end, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. “It is good for us to be here!” It was S. Peter’s unthinking exclamation when he beheld His Master’s glory on earth: the words will be eternally true on our lips when we behold His glory in Heaven. “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory” (Rev. v. 12); may those for whom He was slain be one day worthy to see that glory!

XXVII

THOU HAST LOVED THEM AS THOU HAST LOVED
ME . . . THOU LOVEDST ME BEFORE THE
FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD . . . THAT
THE LOVE WHEREWITH THOU HAST LOVED
ME MAY BE IN THEM, AND I IN THEM

THAT "one day" which has been "known unto the Lord" (Zech. xiv. 7) since He accepted the Incarnation; the day that the whole Christian Church will call "good," has already begun. The Great High Priest must end His prayer now, for He has gathered all other prayers into it.

Listen to His last words, for there have never been any more marvellous on His Lips. He began His prayer with the gift of Life; He ends it with the gift of Love; such Love as the world has never known before.

"Like as a father pitith his children"; "as one whom his mother comforteth"; "as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride"—these are man's love-comparisons, but they will not do for Him. The father may deliver up the child to death; the mother may forget her sucking child; the bridegroom may put away his bride. Love, to Him, has only one worthy comparison, the Love of God Himself; in His sight no lesser love would be worth giving to His friends. "The love wherewith Thou hast loved Me"; that is the love that He longs to share with them.

Can we even dimly grasp what the gift is that He is distributing to us? He is giving us the Love that the

Eternal Father feels for His Only-Begotten Son ; the Love of the One Person of the Holy Trinity for the Other ; the Love that designed and carried out the Incarnation ; the Love that is perfect, changeless, inexhaustible. It is a love which is exactly the same for the imperfect as for the perfect ; for the sinner as for the sinless ; for the adopted children as for the Only-Begotten Son. It is a Love so broad that it goes beyond Heaven and earth ; so long that it is eternal ; so deep and high that it includes lost souls and the Sinless Son.

So the prayer that began with eternal Life has ended with eternal Love, and the High Priest's intercession is complete. He has only now to sing the hymn that is the Doxology of His Life, the Gloria of the Passover, the Introit of the Eucharist, and go out to the Mount of Olives.

"There was silence in Heaven about the space of half an hour"—so S. John describes what followed when the Lamb on Mount Zion had opened the seventh and last seal of the Book He had taken from the right Hand of God (Rev. viii. 1). In that silence an angel stood at the golden Altar with "much incense" in his golden censor "to add it to the prayers of all the saints" (Rev. viii. 3, R.V.).

Can we not think that there is silence in Heaven now, that the angelic choirs are listening while the Lamb Himself is singing the Hallel on earth ? But the prayer of the King of saints needs no incense added to it ; it has gone to the very Heart of God. So long as the world shall last, the prayer of the Son will be in the Heart of the Father, and whatsoever He has asked for us in the Father's Name He will receive ; but what He has asked for us to-night in this lowly room, He will go on asking until even He need pray for us no longer, for we shall have received all that even His love could desire. Shall we then cease to need the ministry of our great High

Priest ? Ah, no, no ! The sin-offering is temporal ; the thank-offering is eternal ; though "there is no more offering for sin," we shall want Him to offer for us "the sacrifice of thanksgiving" for ever and ever.

Let us imagine it all once more. The Holy City all unconscious of what is happening in one of its houses ; the good counsellor and the "master in Israel," not yet knowing the sacred duty of to-morrow evening ; the restless dreamer in Pilate's palace ; the thieves spending their last hours in prison ; the soldiers preparing their weapons and lighting their lanterns ; the traitor arranging his most awful "sign," the Roman governor ; the Galilean tetrarch ; the priests and elders—let us think of them all.

Let us picture the olive-grove across the Kedron valley ; the high priest's hall with its charcoal brazier ; the Prætorium in the fortress by the Temple ; the Via Dolorosa winding across the city ; the place that is called Calvary ; the fair garden among the rocks, lighted to-night by the Paschal moon but so soon to be in the Resurrection sunlight—let us think of those.

Then let us look upon the Face of God's anointed Priest, look with burning love and utter penitence, absolutely certain that what we have heard Him ask for us, God has given in fullest measure. In the strength of His prayer let us follow Him to Gethsemane and Calvary ; let us watch by His Cross and wait by His Grave ; let us rejoice in His victory and share His thanksgiving, and in the eternal ages we shall understand how the Love of the Father has answered the prayer of the great High Priest, His only Son—our Lord.

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